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ABSTRACT

Papers from the conference include the following: "Activites orales et motivation dans l'etude du vocabulaire d'une langue etrangere (Oral Activities and Motivation in the Study of Vocabulary in a Foreign Language)" (M. Guisset); "Bridging High School and College Classes through the Multicultural Approach: The Case of Francophone Africa" (T. Mosadomi); "Foreign Language Education in the Middle School: A Special Education Teacher's View" (M. G. M. Finamore); "German Folk Dances: An Innovative Teaching Tool" (A. Wedekind); "How Can a Mess Be Fine? Polysemy and Reading in a Foreign Language" (H-W. Kang); "Interactive Pedagogy in a Literature Based Classroom" (V. Mayer); "Language Telecourses for Adults--Pros and Cons" (M. S. Pearlman); "Les Santons de Provence: Inspiration for an Interdisciplinary Project" (L. L. Lucietto); "More than a Required Skill in Today's Curriculum: Critical Thinking and Collaborative Learning in Foreign Languages" (C. E. Klein); "Music as a Means to Enhance Cultural Awareness and Literacy in the Foreign Language Classroom" (J. W. Failoni); "Near Immersion Results in One-Third of the Time" (J. Lang); "On Organizing a Learner-Centered Advanced Conversation Course" (D. Guenin-Lelle); "Opera and Art in the French Foreign Language Classroom" (L. Hekmatpanah); "Strategies for Producing a Video-Letter in the Foreign Language Classroom" (M. F. Dominguez); "The Language of Language: An Interdisciplinary Approach to Language Learning" (J. T. Mann); "Towards Teaching French Civilization in Context: A Technology-Aided Approach" (E. L. Corredor); and "Where Is the Text? Discourse Competence and the Foreign Language Textbook" (M. A. Kaplan, E. Knutson). (VWL)

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Mid-Atlantic Journal of Foreign Language Pedagogy

Foreign-Language Pedagogy: Practical Applications to Theoretical Concerns

SELECTED PAPERS FROM THE LOYOLA COLLEGE CONFERENCE ENTITLED BRINGING THEORY AND PRACTICE IN THE FOREIGN - LANGUAGE CLASSROOM

A MARYLAND FOREIGN LANGUAGE ASSOCIATION PUBLICATION

Joseph A. Wieczorek, editor
Loyola College in Maryland &
Maryland Foreign Language Association
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Preface

The past decade has undergone a great transformation in how the field of foreign-language education perceives pedagogy. At one time, pedagogy was considered a separate entity from the field of linguistics. As applied linguistics developed in its own right, pedagogy was still viewed as an adjunct to the more "scientific" theoretical concerns. Not validated until recently was the fact that theoreticians rarely consulted those who were consumers of their research product (namely, classroom instructors). More complicated still was the phenomenon that those not trained in applied linguistics found themselves teaching language. Pedagogy was therefore seen as subservient to theoretical or applied linguistics. However, pedagogy has seen a renewed interest-a linguistic Phoenix. Pedagogy is not only theory-oriented, it is a co-partner. These papers represent some of the finest in this partnership.

The articles by Wedekind, Failoni and Hekmatpanah all deal with the relationship of music as an integral reflection of the culture. Lucietto's approach to foreign-language education includes art, while Corredor looks at technology and civilization. In a unique article, Finamore discusses important areas for foreign-language education: the relationship between special education and foreign languages within the context of the middle school population. Mann offers his perspective on an interdisciplinary approach, and Klein address the need for considering critical thinking and cooperative learning. Our Canadian neighbors, Guisset and Lang, offer methodological perspectives on vocabulary building and immersion. Kang considers reading while Mayer looks at literature through interactive pedagogy. Knutsen and Kaplan consider discourse and the textbook. Pearlman and Dominguez each addresses newer technologies for distance communication. Guenin-Lelle offers and interesting perspective on the advanced conversation course. Finally, Mosadami looks at a major concern for all teachers of French: the francophone world. These are, as the reader will soon find out, excellent examples of how foreign-language educators are shaping the parameters of pedagogy.

I would like to thank the Maryland Foreign Language Association for their subvention of these articles. I would also like to thank the Department of Modern Language at Loyola College for their support, especially my colleagues Margaret Haggstrom, Leslie Morgan, and Gisèle Child-Olmsted, Natalie Rock and Gina Gordon who helped in preparing the manuscript for publication. Needless to say, all those whose articles appear here have cooperated in untold ways. They are true applied linguists. It is hoped that this in the first of the publications by the Maryland Foreign Language Association will spark interest and dialogue between the theory-bound and the classroom oriented.

Joseph A. Wieczorek
Baltimore, MD

February 2, 1993

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Maria Finamore, a graduate of the University of Delaware, has a B.A. in French with a minor in Education and Spanish. She has a Plus 30 in English and an M. Ed. in Special Education: Socially and Emotionally Maladjusted Children. She has an additional 35 credits in various methodology courses as well as Foreign Language and many related linguistics courses. Maria Finamore holds professional teaching certificates in French, Spanish, English and Special Education. She has developed her theory from her experience as a teacher of Foreign Language, English and Special Education at the middle school level since 1972.

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Elizabeth M. Knutson (Ph.D., University of Pennsylvania) is Assistant Professor of French at the U.S. Naval Academy and was formerly Head of the French and Italian Sections at the Foreign Service Institute, U.S. Department of State. She is co-author, with Barbara Freed, of a textbook of communicative activities for four skills, *Contextes: French for Communication* (Newbury House 1989).

John Lang has worked 27 years as a teacher, Supervisor and Superintendent in north western New Brunswick. He is currently a District Education Supervisor, working in the areas of French Second Language and Administration. His M.Ed. thesis was a replication of the Pennsylvania Foreign Language Project of Dr. Philip Smith entitled "A Comparison of the Audiolingual and Traditional Approaches to Teaching French in New Brunswick".

Lena L. Lucietto teaches French and Spanish at the Isidore Newman School, New Orleans, Louisiana, where she also serves as chairperson of the foreign language department. From 1986-1990, she was a member of the charter faculty at the Illinois Mathematics and Science Academy, Aurora, Illinois, where, in collaboration with the art teacher, she carried out the interdisciplinary project reported here. She has taught foreign languages in a number of settings, including the Chicago public schools, and the Language Institute of Rhode Island, a language

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ACTIVITES ORALES ET MOTIVATION DANS L'ETUDE DU VOCABULAIRE D'UNE LANGUE ETRANGERE

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Abstract

L'enseignement du vocabulaire est, depuis longtemps, un élément de controverse en didactique des langues étrangères. Les méthodes basées sur la théorie logico-littéraire en abusaient alors que des méthodes plus modernes mettant l'accent sur la structure ou la communication ont tendance à le négliger. On ne peut cependant exprimer sa pensée sans mots. La lecture est considérée par certains comme le meilleur moyen d'enrichir le vocabulaire mais ce n'est peut-être pas le plus efficace pour les apprenants d'une langue seconde ou étrangère. Quant aux exercices de vocabulaire, ils sont souvent difficiles, ennuyants, écrits et individuels. Une approche "communicative" de l'enseignement du vocabulaire est proposée. Elle est communicative en ce sens qu'elle permet un maximum d'interactions orales. Utilisant des formats d'activités d'enrichissement du vocabulaire déjà sur le marché, elle assure la répétition des mots dans des contextes ludiques et dans une saine atmosphère de compétition. Elle peut être utilisée après la découverte en contexte de mots nouveaux ou après des exercices de définitions préparatoires à la lecture. La liste d'une douzaine d'activités accompagne la description de cette approche.

Teaching vocabulary has been controversial for a long time among foreign language teachers. In the grammar-translation approach there was too much of it while in the more modern approaches (structural, communicative) there is a tendency to ignore it. It is, however, impossible to express oneself without words. While reading is considered by some as the best way to improve one's vocabulary, it presents specific difficulties to students of a foreign language. As for the exercises of vocabulary, they are often put aside in a course based on the communicative approach principles because those exercises are regarded as "written, individual, boring". They do not have to be so and this article proposes a "communicative" way to present them so that the students will not "waste" a precious time of communication. This technique gives them a maximum time of verbal interactions while improving their knowledge of the target language vocabulary. It gives them a frame in which they repeat the words, manipulate them and memorize them without effort, while conversing, in a stimulating atmosphere of team work and competition. This method can best be used in conjunction with the traditional exercises surrounding a reading session. A list of a dozen of activities is given.

La technique décrite dans cet article est utilisée avec des classes d'immersion en français, langue seconde, du niveau post-secondaire, à l'Université de Moncton, Canada. Elle a pour but de rendre l'apprentissage du vocabulaire plus intéressant et efficace tout en maximisant le temps d'interactions verbales. Elle veut répondre à un besoin spécifique qui n'est cependant pas unique à la situation d'apprentissage au niveau post-secondaire: celui de développer efficacement les connaissances lexicales des élèves pour leur permettre de communiquer plus et mieux. Les réflexions qui suivent sont générales et cherchent à décrire certaines préoccupations des enseignants d'une langue étrangère ou seconde (L2) dans le domaine de l'enseignement du vocabulaire. L'importance donnée à celui-ci dépend des principes théoriques dont s'inspirent, d'une part, les manuels en usage dans les écoles et, d'autre part, les pédagogues qui les utilisent. Son importance peut aussi varier selon que la langue cible est enseignée comme langue seconde (présence d'une communauté de locuteurs natifs de la langue cible importante et proche de l'école) ou comme langue étrangère (éloignement ou absence de toute communauté de locuteurs natifs rendant les occasions d'échanges difficiles ou improbables). De façon générale, ou l'enseignement du vocabulaire est négligé ou il consiste en exercices écrits individuels. Après

quelques réflexions sur l'importance de cet enseignement dans la perspective de l'entraînement à la communication et la description des avantages et des inconvénients des deux types d'activités d'enrichissement du vocabulaire les plus utilisés, on décrira une technique qui permet de faire de cet apprentissage un jeu et un moment fort d'interactions verbales.

A. Enseignement du vocabulaire dans un pédagogie de la communication

Sous prétexte de donner aux élèves le maximum de temps de parole, les tenants des approches dites communicatives ont tendance à négliger les activités d'enrichissement du vocabulaire. D'autres, dans le but de maintenir l'attention des élèves sur les structures, base de l'enseignement des langues étrangères depuis le milieu du siècle et de ne pas les distraire par des difficultés lexicales, n'utilisent qu'un vocabulaire simple, fondamental, facile. Pour les uns comme pour les autres, les élèves devraient ***se tirer d'affaire*** en utilisant, selon les besoins, des périphrases ou des gestes pour compenser une carence générale de termes précis. Or, pour exprimer leur pensée, que ce soit dans le cadre d'échanges verbaux ou écrits en classe ou dans la rue, les élèves ont besoin de mots. Plus ils en connaîtront, plus leur message pourra être clair même s'il reste boiteux d'un point de vue structural ou grammatical.

On peut donc s'interroger sur la place de l'enseignement du vocabulaire dans les classes de langues secondes ou étrangères visant le développement d'habiletés de communication, sur les formes que cet enseignement peut prendre et sur les manières de le rendre plus communicatif, amusant, efficace, motivant.

Revenons d'abord sur l'importance du mot juste. Puisqu'on reconnaît la communication comme l'objectif principal de l'enseignement d'une L2 et que, affirme Monique Nemni (1985), "...d'un point de vue communicatif, un seul mot bien choisi peut suffire à faire passer le message" (p. 1020), on est en droit de se demander si l'enseignement du vocabulaire occupe, dans nos classes, la place qui lui revient. Tous ceux qui ont essayé de se faire comprendre par périphrases (surtout dans une langue étrangère!) chez le médecin, dans une quincaillerie, un magasin, une banque ou même à la maison reconnaîtront la justesse de l'affirmation de Nemni. Le mot précis donne du référent toutes les informations essentielles alors que les périphrases et les explications ne sont jamais que partielles, imparfaites, difficiles à comprendre surtout quand elles sont le produit d'apprentis de la langue. Elles sont la cause de frustrations chez l'émetteur et parfois de tensions entre les interlocuteurs.

Si l'objectif d'un cours de langue est de donner aux élèves les outils dont ils ont besoin pour communiquer, l'importance d'un vocabulaire riche et précis doit être reconnue et les moyens d'en assurer la maîtrise doivent être mis à la disposition des élèves par l'école. Point n'est besoin cependant d'en retourner à la mémorisation quotidienne de listes de mots de vocabulaire tirés de textes littéraires comme on en avait coutume autrefois dans les méthodes de type logico-littéraire. Mais une remise en valeur des exercices de vocabulaire est souhaitable surtout s'ils sont, comme nous le proposons,-adaptés de façon à faire de la classe un haut lieu d'interactions verbales.

Que faut-il enseigner? Où faut-il commencer et arrêter? Les besoins lexicaux d'un élève sont différents de ceux de ses voisins. Il y aura toujours, dans ce domaine, une place pour l'effort individuel de recherche permettant l'adaptation à l'environnement social et professionnel de chacun. Les enseignants ne pourront jamais prévoir tous les besoins futurs de tous les élèves pour

chaque situation rencontrée dans leur vie. Mais ils peuvent s'efforcer de les faire progresser dans la connaissance, dans la langue cible, des réalités qui les entourent et d'assurer que le vocabulaire rencontré (lors de lectures, projets, présentations, etc.) est bien ***compris, répété et utilisé***. Répétons-le, plus le vocabulaire d'un individu est précis et étendu, plus il a de plaisir et d'envie de s'exprimer (cela est vrai autant dans la langue maternelle (L1) que dans la langue étrangère (L2)!). Nous pensons donc que le temps de classe passé à la répétition de structures pourrait être réduit de manière à faire place à plus d'exercices d'enrichissement du vocabulaire.

Cet enrichissement se fait traditionnellement de deux manières: par des exercices de lecture ou par des exercices de vocabulaire. D'aucuns veulent les opposer; nous croyons qu'ils sont complémentaires et nous voudrions y ajouter une dimension communicative qui n'a d'originalité que dans les applications qui sont proposées.

B. Lire pour enrichir son vocabulaire: avantages et inconvénients.

1. Avantages

Krashen (1986) et Schwartz (1988) suggèrent d'utiliser la lecture pour augmenter le vocabulaire des élèves de L2. Ces auteurs pensent que l'***intérêt*** pour l'intrigue ou pour la dialectique d'un texte s'allie au ***contexte de la phrase*** pour aider les élèves à découvrir le sens de mots nouveaux et à enrichir ainsi leur vocabulaire. L'exercice de lecture développe chez les élèves les facultés d'observation, de raisonnement, de déduction et de recherche. Les expériences de Palmer (1989) montrent les bienfaits de la lecture de journaux sur les connaissances lexicales, la compréhension et l'expression écrites des élèves constituant son échantillon (niveau secondaire premier et deuxième cycles: élèves de 12 à 17 ans).La lecture devrait donc constituer un moyen naturel d'acquisition de mots nouveaux tant pour les élèves de L2 que pour ceux de L1. S'il n'en est habituellement pas ainsi, c'est que les élèves de nos classes de langues étrangères, déjà handicapés par les vocables nouveaux de la langue cible, font face aux mêmes problèmes que les jeunes lecteurs en L1. Qu'il nous soit permis, avec quelques auteurs, d'en signaler quelques-uns:

2. Inconvénients

a. l'***absence d'intérêt*** pour la lecture chez les jeunes de cette fin du 20e siècle (Bochart et Delahaut, 1991). Plus intéressés par le visuel (télévision) que par l'écrit, ils ne lisent pas ou pas assez dans leur langue maternelle et n'ont en conséquence que peu d'intérêt pour ce genre d'activité dans la langue cible.

b. ***le manque de techniques de lecture***: s'ajoutant à l'absence d'intérêt et s'expliquant en partie par elle, il nous permet de deviner les obstacles psychologiques auxquels doivent faire face les enseignants qui souhaitent utiliser la lecture pour améliorer les connaissances lexicales de leurs élèves.

c. compter sur le contexte de la phrase ou du paragraphe pour révéler le sens des mots nouveaux peut amener les enseignants à mettre les élèves devant des tâches au-dessus de leurs forces d'abord parce que, comme on l'a vu plus haut, ceux-ci n'ont pas ou ont peu de techniques de lecture; ensuite, parce que le contexte de la phrase ou d'un paragraphe n'est pas toujours clair et ne livre pas aisément le sens des mots. Les apprenants d'une L2 souffrent surtout de cette

obscurité du contexte dans les nombreux textes authentiques utilisés actuellement dans leurs cours mais ce ne sont pas les seuls textes obscurs comme le montrent les expériences de Armbruster et Gudbrandsen (1986), Konopak (1988) de même que Hafner et Stakenas (1990) sur des manuels scolaires. Cette difficulté peut être amoindrie si, comme le suggèrent Konopak (1988b) et Kolich (1988) on fait précéder la lecture d'exercices de définition de lexèmes dans le but de la rendre plus accessible.Notre expérience personnelle nous fait penser que, à la limite, ***seuls des textes rédigés dans le but spécifique d'aider les élèves à découvrir le sens de mots nouveaux, par le truchement du contexte dans lequel ils sont utilisés***, peuvent donner des résultats satisfaisants.

d. Signalons encore avec Hafner et Stakenas (1990), Konopak (1988) de même que Hirch et Chall cités par Palmer (1989) un certain ***analphabétisme culturel***. Ces auteurs constatent que, souvent, les élèves n'ont pas les connaissances culturelles, politiques et sociales qui leur permettraient de se servir du contexte pour comprendre un texte.

e. L'utilisation de la lecture pour l'enrichissement du bagage lexical de nos élèves de L2 n'est donc peut-être pas la voie la plus efficace même si on se doit de l'encourager et de la mettre à la disposition des élèves capables de l'utiliser. Aux difficultés engendrées par les imprécisions du contexte et par les habitudes de lecture (ou leur absence) des élèves, ajoutons la faiblesse des textes, surtout authentiques, dans la création d'un ***environnement favorable*** à la mémorisation. En effet, pour fixer un vocabulaire nouveau dans la mémoire, surtout avec l'espoir de le rendre actif, il faut que ce dernier soit manipulé de façon répétitive. La clé du succès, dans le domaine de l'enrichissement du vocabulaire, est la ***répétition*** (Hargis et al, 1988). Or, le nombre de fois qu'un mot nouveau apparaît dans un texte est fonction du hasard ou de l'esthétique du texte et non des règles de la mémorisation. Si la lecture offre l'avantage de présenter les mots dans le contexte naturel de la phrase (avec les dangers signalés plus haut), elle doit être complétée par des exercices de vocabulaire qui, eux, pourront plus facilement assurer cette répétition nécessaire à la mémorisation. Ces exercices seront variés et pourront, comme nous le suggérons plus loin, devenir eux-mêmes des exercices de communication.

C. Les exercices et l'enrichissement du vocabulaire: le pour et le contre.

1. Types d'exercices et avantages

Pour développer le bagage lexical de leurs élèves, certains comme Hollaway (1989) ont développé des procédés mnémotechniques; d'autres s'efforcent de les aider à mémoriser celui-ci par des techniques s'inspirant de la méthode de la réponse physique totale de Asher (Glisan, 1988) mais la technique la plus utilisée, mise à part la lecture, reste encore l'exercice de vocabulaire. Il présente l'avantage, en plus de celui de la répétition des lexèmes, de permettre la présentation immédiate des ***différents sèmes*** d'un même mot amenant ainsi les élèves à augmenter rapidement leur vocabulaire.

En effet, à partir d'un mot, ils découvrent une série de ***nuances*** et d'***usages*** que le contexte, dans la lecture, ne leur fait pas découvrir. Exemple:

"chameau"
sèmes syntaxiques: substantif, masculin, adjectif
sèmes référentiels: mammifère, ruminant, à 2 bosses
sème virtuel: insulte qui veut dire: personne méchante, désagréable

Dans les exercices, il est aussi plus facile d'attirer l'attention des élèves notamment anglophones sur le genre des mots nouveaux (le cerveau d'un anglophone est, en effet, peu ou pas programmé pour noter ces détails pratiquement inexistants dans leur langue maternelle).[1] Les exercices, surtout variés, permettent la ***répétition*** des termes nouveaux, leur ***précision***, la vérification de leur ***usage*** correct dans des contextes différents. Ils peuvent comporter l'utilisation des mots nouveaux dans des ***énoncés*** proposés par les élèves ou des ***définitions de termes*** avec leurs connaissances lexicales du moment. Ce peut être des exercices de synonymes ou de contraires permettant la découverte des différents sèmes référentiels et parfois virtuels du mot (exemple: brave peut avoir comme synonyme "bon", "gentil", "serviable" mais aussi "courageux", "vaillant"). Contrairement aux exercices de lecture, les exercices de vocabulaire permettent donc de présenter facilement, d'un mot, les sens et usages différents. Ils présentent aussi l'avantage d'un ***contrôle*** aisé de la matière enseignée. Ils peuvent se faire ***individuellement*** comme devoirs en dehors de la classe ou comme travail donné à des élèves plus doués.

2. Faiblesses

Les qualités des exercices de vocabulaire en constituent aussi les défauts. Etant individuels, ils se font dans l'***isolement*** privant les élèves d'interactions verbales bien nécessaires. Etant souvent écrits, ils sont ***ennuyants*** et semblent déplacés dans le cadre d'une pédagogie de la communication. Ils paraissent, à certains, n'être ni plus ni moins qu'une solution de facilité qui permet à l'enseignant de meubler le temps de classe et d'y assurer une certaine discipline.

Evaluant les activités proposées aux élèves à la lumière des objectifs du cours qui sont, rappelons-le, le développement d'habiletés à communiquer, certains pédagogues ont tout simplement rayé de leurs activités de classe les exercices de vocabulaire de même, dans certains cas, que les exercices de lecture. Comme nous le faisions remarquer en commençant, il n'est cependant pas possible de s'exprimer sans mots et la satisfaction qu'un individu retirera de son expérience langagière est directement proportionnelle à la richesse de son vocabulaire. La plupart des exercices de vocabulaire qui, pensons-nous, devraient suivre les exercices de lecture, pourraient pourtant devenir des temps forts d'interactions verbales.

D. Où l'exercice écrit devient oral! Méthodologie

La technique proposée est simple: elle consiste à faire exécuter des exercices, traditionnellement écrits, en ***équipes et donc oralement***[2]. Qui dit équipes dit ***compétition***, vitesse et il est rare de voir des élèves rester indifférents à l'atmosphère électrisante d'une bonne compétition inter-équipes. Du point de vue de l'enrichissement du vocabulaire, le travail en équipes au cours de ces exercices est très efficace. En effet, l'échange verbal continu et animé entre les élèves porte sur les éléments lexicaux à l'étude. Cette discussion assure la répétition des

mots et la réflexion sur leur(s) sens et leurs usages. Pour donner une idée de l'intérêt du travail en équipes dans la perspective de l'approche communicative qu'il nous suffise d'énoncer quelques notions, opérations discursives et actes de parole impliqués dans ces échanges:

1. les élèves doivent établir l'existence d'un objet ou d'une personne, le temps, l'espace, les qualités physiques et établir des relations comparatives et logiques comme l'opposition, la concession, l'inclusion, l'exclusion, la cause, la conséquence, la finalité, la condition etc.

2. ils doivent deviner, citer, préciser, illustrer, nommer, comparer, argumenter, juger, analyser, définir, clarifier, décrire ainsi qu'épeler, se corriger, corriger autrui, ou déconseiller, faire des hypothèses, se féliciter, féliciter autrui, demander de l'information, exprimer son ignorance ou son indécision etc.

3. ils doivent montrer leur affectivité, leur surprise, leur indifférence, leur joie, leur regret, leur embarras, leur confiance, leur tolérance etc.

Il est parfois difficile de motiver les élèves à apprendre, (du vocabulaire surtout!) ou à s'exprimer dans la langue cible mais en équipes la tâche devient un jeu, la communication un besoin. La motivation est grande dans une saine compétition et est renforcée par le constat d'un apprentissage facile, sans effort. Nous voudrions décrire un usage particulier de la technique du travail en équipes dans des activités de vocabulaire que la plupart des manuels scolaires réservent au travail individuel.

Dans la section lecture de mon cours d'immersion,[3] désireux de donner à mes étudiants de niveau post-secondaire l'occasion d'augmenter leur vocabulaire autant actif que passif sans les priver de temps de communication orale, j'ai fait, du vocabulaire de chaque chapitre, des activités s'inspirant du principe suggéré plus haut. Elles ont été rassemblées dans un cahier intitulé ***Use, ruse, amuse***.[4] La technique, bien qu'elle puisse varier légèrement d'un exercice à l'autre, comporte les points suivants:

1. formation des équipes (4 étudiants)
2. explication de l'activité
3. présentation orale des indices ou des définitions
4. réponses orales des équipes (1 point par bonne réponse)
5. distribution des grilles et remplissage
6. fin de l'activité
7. désignation de l'équipe gagnante

Pour les enseignants qui désirent préparer leurs activités à partir d'un vocabulaire spécifique, un guide de 30 pages (Guisset 1992) est disponible. Il décrit les étapes de préparation et d'exécution des activités suivantes:

1. mots croisés
2. mots en carré
3. jeu du pendu
4. "pictionary"
5. mots mélangés
6. scrabble
7. devinettes
8. biocrostiches
9. mots en zigzags
10. mots à rallonges
11. mot mystère
12. anacroisés
13. charades
14. entrecroisés

Trois exemples sont présentés en appendice: un biocrostiche (appendice A), un mot mystère (appendice B) et un anacroisé (appendice C).

Nous pensons que, dans un cours de langue, toutes les activités proposées aux élèves doivent être présentées de telle sorte que ceux-ci les trouvent intéressantes, en retirent le maximum de profit et progressent, grâce à elles, vers les objectifs qu'ils se sont fixés. C'est la raison pour laquelle, dans notre module "lecture", nous prévoyons des activités de pré-lecture et nous faisons suivre celle-ci par des activités du type décrit plus haut au cours desquelles les mots nouveaux sont discutés et utilisés dans un environnement favorisant les échanges verbaux.

E. Conclusions

Nous avons souligné l'erreur d'opposer une activité d'apprentissage à une autre: lecture versus exercices, activités de communication versus exercices ou lecture. Elles ont toutes leur place dans l'enseignement d'une L2. Ce qui compte, c'est la qualité et la fréquence de chacune de ces activités. Vouloir faire de la "communication" sans la préparer ou l'améliorer par des exercices consiste, osons une comparaison, à demander à un pianiste débutant de jouer un concerto ou de composer une symphonie sans préparation. Peut-être se tirera-t-il d'affaire s'il est extrêmement doué mais sa performance sera meilleure et la satisfaction qu'il retirera de son expérience sera plus grande s'il s'est bien entraîné. Le terme "exercices", comme le terme "gammes" pour un musicien ou "entraînement" pour un sportif, représente dans l'esprit de beaucoup une réalité plus proche des travaux forcés que du plaisir. L'entraînement est pourtant nécessaire pour l'acquisition ou la maîtrise d'une habileté. Sans exercices, le progrès est lent, les échanges restent à un état embryonnaire, les élèves n'atteignent jamais leur potentiel; sans un vocabulaire précis et varié, les échanges verbaux sont difficiles pour l'émetteur comme pour le récepteur. Ces difficultés, entravant la communication, entraînent une diminution de la motivation à étudier et à utiliser une L2. Avec un peu d'imagination un exercice peut se transformer en jeu, une activité traditionnellement écrite en occasions d'interactions verbales intenses, l'étude du vocabulaire en un élément très motivant, amusant et efficace dans l'étude d'une langue étrangère.

Appendice A

UN BIOCROSTICHE (chapitre 16, Use, ruse, amuse)

Description:
1. présentation orale des indices
2. numérotation des lettres des mots trouvés (grille 1)
3. disposition des lettres dans la grille 2
4. découverte du message et exécution
5. formation d'un mot avec lettres restantes
6. désignation de l'équipe gagnante

Ex: Indices (1 point par bonne réponse)

A. Il est dans un état d'admiration profonde ---> émerveillé

B. Ce sont des caprices ---> fantaisies (mot du vocabulaire du chapitre) etc...

Grille 1

A. __ _ __ __ _ __ __ __ _ __
31 36 99 68 62 3 73

B. __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __
64 6 78 49 13 66 63 71 4 91

(les élèves écrivent les mots trouvés. Presque chaque lettre correspond à un numéro)

Grille 2

E 1	C 2	A 3	B 4	H 5	**** ****	B 6	C 7	**** ****	L 8	J 9	K 10
L 11	G 12	B 13	F 14	**** ****	I 15	L 16	F 17	K 18	L 19	G 20	J 21
E 22	**** ****	I 23	E 25								
A 31	C 32	D 33									

etc.

Nous savons, grâce aux informations de la grille 1 que la lettre A 3 est un L; la lettre B 4 un E; la lettre B 6 un A etc. Lorsque les mots sont trouvés (étapes des définitions), il suffit aux équipes de placer les mots dans la grille 1 puis dans la grille 2 pour trouver le message. (10 points)

Note: pour gagner, l'équipe doit non seulement trouver le message mais aussi l'exécuter. Les mots utilisés sont, rappelons-le, tous tirés du chapitre étudié, des chapitres précédents ou (quand

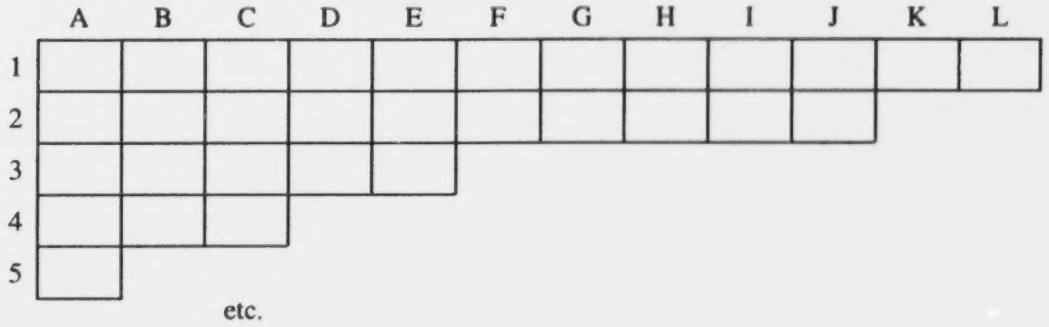
il n'y a pas moyen de faire autrement) d'un vocabulaire simple et fondamental que les élèves doivent déjà connaître.

On remarquera que certaines lettres ne sont pas numérotées. Dans le commerce, les concepteurs de tels jeux n'ont pas de difficultés à utiliser toutes les lettres dans leurs biocrostiches car ils ont tout le lexique à leur disposition. Les enseignants, créant leurs propres activités, doivent s'en tenir au vocabulaire connu par les élèves (le but de ces activités est, en effet, de faire utiliser le vocabulaire étudié). Il n'est, dès lors, pas toujours possible d'utiliser toutes les lettres dans le message. Au lieu de les ignorer, je demande aux élèves, au cours d'une cinquième étape de constituer (toujours en équipes) avec les lettres restantes et sans dictionnaire (règle générale pour toutes les activités!) le mot le plus long possible. (5 points)

Appendice B

UN MOT MYSTERE

L'activité se déroule comme d'habitude en équipes et sans recours au dictionnaire ou autres manuscrits. Il porte sur le vocabulaire du chapitre étudié, celui des chapitres précédents et des mots très simples que les étudiants doivent connaître.Les indices ou définitions sont présentés oralement. Les équipes proposent leur réponse et se méritent un point chaque fois qu'elles en donnent une bonne. La liste des mots trouvés est écrite au tableau et lorsque celle des indices est épuisée les grilles sont distribuées (ou les carnets sont ouverts dans le cas du livre Use, ruse, amuse). Les équipes retrouvent les mots dans la grille et proposent le mot mystère. Cette activité est très facile à préparer: il suffit de dessiner une grille du genre de celle qui suit:



Lorsque la grille est dessinée, on remplit les cases en plaçant les mots dans toutes les directions: ils pourront se lire de bas en haut, de haut en bas, diagonalement vers le haut ou vers le bas, de droite à gauche ou de gauche à droite. Lorsque tous les mots choisis ont été placés dans la grille (ils devront être, au cours de l'activité, retrouvés par les équipes), il doit rester des cases dans lesquelles on placera, dans l'ordre, les lettres du mot mystère.

Appendice C

UN ANACROISE

L'activité comprend des définitions ou indices présentés oralement aux équipes. Celles-ci essaient de découvrir le mot ainsi défini et reçoivent un point par bonne réponse. Les mots trouvés sont écrits au tableau et lorsque la liste des indices est épuisée, les équipes essaient d'aligner les mots verticalement de manière à découvrir un mot du vocabulaire qui se lit de haut en bas. L'activité peut être rendue plus complexe par la présentation des indices non dans l'ordre (le premier mot donnant la première lettre du mot à trouver et le dernier, la dernière lettre) mais dans le désordre (les étudiants ayant alors non seulement à aligner les mots mais à les remettre en ordre).

Exemple: (mots tirés du chapitre 21 de l'Art de lire)

Définitions:

1. On ne peut presque pas l'entendre
   ---> imperceptible
2. L'extrémité d'un crayon --->pointe
3. Il n'admet aucune faiblesse, aucune erreur ---> exigeant
4. C'est à moi et pas à un autre
   ---> propre
5. Il vit à l'école et ne retourne chez lui que pour les vacances
   --->interne
6. Petite lampe témoin ---> voyant

Mot à trouver: épopée

i m p **E** r c e p t i b l e
p r o **P** r e
v **O** y a n t
P o i n t e
i n t **E** r n e
E x i g e a n t

Endnotes

1. J'utilise avec mes classes d'immersion des moyens mnémotechniques associant couleurs ou énoncés d'un certain type au genre des mots nouveaux. Dans leur cahier de vocabulaire, j'invite mes étudiants à écrire les mots masculins en bleu, par exemple, et les mots féminins en rouge (tout autre code est acceptable!) ou je leur demande d'écrire des énoncés avec chaque mot nouveau. Dans ce cas, le sujet sera un homme si le mot est masculin et une femme si le mot est féminin et l'énoncé sera aussi amusant et chargé d'émotion que possible.

2. Dans mes classes, tous les exercices, même de grammaire, se font en équipes (2 ou 3 membres). Les étudiants sont invités à défendre leur point de vue et à ne pas se laisser imposer une réponse qui ne leur paraît pas correcte. Un des meilleurs moyens d'apprendre!

3. J'utilise depuis quelques années le livre de lecture *L'Art de lire* de Quentin Hope (Macmillan 1988). Ce livre comprend des introductions au vocabulaire nouveau (mots apparentés L1-L2, faux amis, mots-clés, explications) ainsi que des exercices de vérification de la compréhension et de synonymes et contraires.

4. On n'a pas jugé financièrement viable de publier ces cahiers d'activités (cahier du professeur,135 pages et cahier de l'étudiant, 89 pages) étant donné que seuls les classes utilisant le livre de lecture *L'Art de lire* pourraient en profiter. Des photocopies seront faites pour les personnes désirant se les procurer. S'adresser à l'auteur, Université de Moncton, Moncton, NB E1A 3E9, Canada. Les activités et la technique sont décrits dans un petit livre de 30 pages publié à l'Université de Moncton et intitulé *Mots à dire* (9 dollars). C'est un guide facilitant la tâche des enseignants qui veulent préparer leurs propres activités à partir d'un vocabulaire limité et en faire des moments de communication. On y présente la technique, un exemple de chaque activité et des grilles vierges.

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BRIDGING HIGH SCHOOL AND COLLEGE LANGUAGE CLASSES THROUGH THE MULTICULTURAL APPROACH: THE CASE OF FRANCOPHONE AFRICA

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Abstract

With the former French colonies gaining independence in the 60's, it has become imperative to recognize cultural plurality in foreign language curriculum, in a world that is getting smaller by the day. When French language and literature texts reflect the multiplicity of cultural perspectives, it then becomes clear that a broad effort is being made toward establishing support for an increasingly diverse and inclusive curriculum.

Today, French language teachers face a 'holistic foreign language education' problem. A dangerously inadequate interpretation of our national goal is to limit our knowledge of French language to that of the mother nation only. When we speak of 'Le monde francophone', we should not forget the French Caribbean, French Canada, the Francophone of South-East Asia, French-speaking Europe and Africa, and Louisiana, whose language and cultures should not be ignored.

A regional background survey that I did on attitudes on 'la Francophonie' will help us understand reactions to the inclusion of Francophone Identities in foreign language education.

For French teachers to create an appreciation of diversity and an expression of global awareness through cultural investigation, even at the elementary level, such topics as 'le transport au Gabon', 'le marche malgache', 'les saisons au Canada', or 'les habits en Guadeloupe' can be taught. But in order to do this, the teacher needs to access information through the embassies, the native speakers, as well as by attending regional and international Francophone conferences.

It is by so doing that French language educators will, in the words of 'Virginia Principles of Foreign Languages in Schools', "help students understand and appreciate people of different nationalities and ethnic groups and their contributions to the development of our nation", a principle that is most nationally embraced.

It's a small world and getting smaller day by day. With the former French colonies gaining independence from their 'mother' nation in the 60's, it is imperative that we recognize cultural plurality within the colonies.. The physical and structural changes in the world today that affect our national goals and objectives at all levels of education and in all subject areas, including foreign languages, cannot be ignored.

There is a gap between high school and college French language classes that can be successfully bridged through a multicultural approach with specific reference to Francophone Africa. In order to do this, we must first recognize some of the problems leading to the creation of this gap, problems that are an integral part of an overall dilemma facing foreign language education today.

It is important to note that there is a concern that encompasses the whole world not only the foreign language teaching process in the United States. There is therefore need for multicultural approach to language studies at all levels.

The idea of multicultural approach to teaching foreign languages dates back to 3000 B.C. when, according to Higgs (1985:13), Titone recognized that the essence of teaching foreign languages is "to communicate with foreign peoples." In 1977, almost 5000 years later, Virginia's Department of Education expressed as one of its guiding principles of foreign language education in *Foreign Languages in Virginia Schools* (1977:1), the need "to help students understand and appreciate people of different nationalities and ethnic groups and their contributions to the development of our nation and culture." Other states have similar goals.

However, our interpretation of this goal is dangerously inadequate with regard to our understanding of other cultures. For example, "communicating with foreign peoples" in French language studies does not limit us to communicating with people **only** from France ailthough textbooks still persist. Similarly, "understanding and appreciating people of different nationalities and ethnic groups" in a French language curriculum should not be limited to understanding and appreciating only the 'mother' nation. A closer look at these policies implies that we should learn the **language** and **cultures** of the **peoples** who speak that foreign language. When we speak of 'Le monde francophone', we should not forget the French Caribbean, French Canada, the Francophone of the Southeast Asia, and French-speaking Europe and Africa, and closer to home, the state of Louisiana and New England, all of whose language and cultures can be included as needed in the French language or literature curriculum.

Not integrating many different Francophone cultures into French grammar texts is a curricula problem. But this problem is part of a broader and more serious problem—that of the ironic decline in foreign language enrollment at a time when there is an compelling need for increased cultural contact with countries all over the world. Jean Seligmann (1991:36) in a Newsweek article "Speaking in Tongues" cited Senator Paul Simon, a long-time foreign-language advocate, as saying "cultural isolation is a luxury the United States can no longer afford."

According to the 1979 Presidential Commission Report on Foreign Languages and International Studies, statistics show that "only 15 percent of American high school students now study a foreign language, down from 24 percent in 1965, and that only one of the twenty public high school students studies French, German or Russian beyond the second year." It was also found that "only 8 percent of American colleges and universities now require a foreign language for admission, compared with 34 percent in 1966." This decline was further corroborated by Seligman (1991:36) who says that "today, only about 5 percent of children in U. S. elementary schools study a foreign language, and *none* of the 50 states requires a language course for all high school students (though the District of Columbia does)."

The Presidential Commission Report also states that in some elementary and secondary schools, foreign language instruction is almost disappearing. So, then, how do these problems translate into bridging the gap between high school and college classes?

If foreign languages in secondary schools are supposed to help students "appreciate and understand people of different origins," and there is a decline in the student enrollment in foreign language studies, it then means that fewer people will be linguistically engaged in "understanding people of different origins." Similarly, lower enrollment in secondary schools translates to lower enrollment in college and university foreign language classes. The cycle continues, ultimately

resulting in a shortage of foreign language teachers who can impart to students their knowledge of other foreign cultures.

Not only do we have a shortage of foreign language educators and a decline in student enrollment, but there is also a crucial problem with the foreign language teacher's knowledge of the subject in terms of what I would describe as holistic foreign language education. We can refer to this problem in the teaching of the French language and literature, as "Francophone Identities." This is an area in which many high school teachers and college professors of French have expressed limited knowledge or complete ignorance. In order to clearly understand this problem, I did a background survey on attitudes on "la Francophonie" at the Francophone Conference organized by the French Department of Hampden-Sydney College at Hampden-Sydney, VA for Virginia high school French teachers. Out of the 27 participants who took time to fill in the questionnaire, my data shows that

1.
   a. none of the participants had ever heard of Francophone African Literature at home.
   b. 44.4% (12 out of 27) had their first encounter of Francophone African Literature at school.
   c. 29.6% (8 out of 27) learned about Francophone African Literature through self-studies (i.e. journals, magazines, textbooks).
   d. 26.0% had no prior knowledge of it.

2.
   a. 74.1% (20 out of 27) had studied African Literature in general.
   b. 25.9% had no prior knowledge of it.

3.
   a. 88.8% expressed an interest in studying African Literature in French.

4.
   a. 92% (25 out of 27) were interested in studying Francophone Literature in general.
   b. 7.4% (2 out of 27) did not fill in this part of questionnaire or did not respond.

5.
   a. 85.2% (23 out of 27) were interested in introducing Francophone Literature into their school curriculum.
   b. 14.8% (4 out of 27) did not respond.

From the above data, several deductions can be made:

A significant proportion of participants had no prior knowledge of Francophone Africa. Also, less than half of the participants had encountered Francophone African studies at school. Interestingly enough, a huge number of participants expressed interest in the inclusion of Francophone studies, in general, in their French language curricula. However, there is no significant increase in the number of those interested in Francophone studies in general and in Francophone African studies. This shows that there is a conscious but slow effort being made by

foreign language educators (in this case, French) to present French to students as a language spoken by many cultures throughout the world, not just in Europe.

The limitations of this statistical data should also be taken into consideration in the sense that the survey is limited to a few participants from only one state, though participants were from various secondary schools of the same state. It would be more interesting to survey across the states and different secondary schools for greater reliability. This effort is already being made.

Largely, results of this survey show that bringing a multicultural approach to the foreign language classroom can create an appreciation of diversity and an expression of global awareness. It also implies that the inclusion of Francophone studies in a French curriculum requires a conscious effort toward establishing an increasingly diverse and inclusive curriculum. Such a curriculum not only indicates a multicultural competency, but also reduces the frustration and ignorance of high school teachers and eventually their students when the latter get to college. There is a clear indication of this ignorance on the part of many students from lower to upper level college classes. It is worthwhile to note, however, that a growing proportion of high school teachers are beginning to introduce 'Francophone identities' in their French language curricula, as have a few college French professors.

In an admittedly incomplete survey of introductory French texts I did, it was found that only a few authors make mention of French culture outside that of France. Perhaps we shouldn't be surprised that such a large number of writers have not paid attention to other Francophone cultures, and perhaps we shouldn't be surprised also that a lot more people are showing an increased interest in the study of Francophone Identities'. In order to bridge the gap between high school and college French classes through a multicultural approach, we should consider the work of Crawford and Lange with regard to language and culture.

Crawford and Lange (1985:138-148) have established the relationship between language and culture: learning the French language is also learning the French culture. But teachers of French need to inform themselves about learning across cultures and teaching the same. French students should not have to wait until they get to college before they learn about other existing Francophone cultures. While teaching *Les courses*, for example, to beginner French classes either at high school or college level, the teacher can introduce simultaneously *Le marché en plein air* (Open-air market) in France, and, say, in Madagascar, an island located off the Southeast coast of Africa. The teacher can also compare and contrast the transportation system in France with that of Haiti, Martinique or Guadeloupe in the Caribbean, or with that of Gabon in Central Africa.

Cultural investigation studies, which provide an excellent source of introducing Francophone studies in the classroom, can be geographical or historical in context. The teacher as well as the students should be resourceful in bringing their cultural research findings to class. By so doing, teachers as well as students can begin to establish cultures that are similar or dissimilar. According to Crawford and Lange, when students are responsible for searching for cultural information, both teachers and students can identify, determine and establish similarities and differences across cultures in the language class (1985:147). Cultural investigation studies can include family, city and rural life, food and clothing, marriage and funeral ceremonies, education,

transportation, and youth and songs, among many others. For example, concerning food, a student can begin by saying

> *Dans mon pays, Madagascar, on mange du varisosoa (du riz avec beaucoup d'eau) ou de l'igname pour le petit déjeuner. Pour le déjeuner, on mange surtout du riz sec accommodé de légumes et de viandes, et pour le dîner, on peut manger encore du riz, avec des légumes. Le repas traditionnel ne se termine pas par un dessert parce qu'on mange des fruits quand on les trouve et il y en a en abondance!*

On the topic of clothing, for example, another student can begin by saying

> *Je suis togolais. Le Togo se trouve dans l'ouest de l' Afrique. On porte le boubou ou le pagne toute l'année au Togo.*

Another student supposedly from France can say what he wears in winter, summer or spring, or better still, what he wears all year round. All these students can present pictures of these cultural phenomena. One should note that discussing weather can also lead to teaching about clothes people wear. In this circumstance and in many others, geographical content and cultural information cannot be separated. Cultural information through shared experiences in the form of role playing can be very exciting in the language classroom. Through cultural-investigation studies, a great deal can be learned. The importance of studying a foreign language through the combination of language and culture cannot be overstressed. So, what can we do to begin changing language studies to include other French cultures and thereby bridge the gap in French language classes at all levels?

Following are several ways in which French teachers can access information to Francophone studies.

(1) The high school teacher or college French professor can attend regional Francophone conferences. National Francophone conferences can also be attended if funds are available.
(2) For professional development, teachers can take continuing education studies in colleges and universities that offer Commonwealth Literature studies.
(3) Teachers of all educational levels are strongly encouraged to participate in community-sponsored programs like regional Francophone conferences, organized by colleges and universities, which feed into the larger conferences, such as C.I.E.F. (Congrès International d'Etudes Francophone).
(4) Teachers of all educational levels have the opportunity to access the foreign embassies for all information they need to promote language and culture in schools and colleges.

I would like to add one of the recommendations made by the Presidential Commission toward enhancing the study of foreign languages and cultures in general:

(5) High school teachers who participate in such conferences should be offered incentives such as credits towards certification or recertification. Also there could be special recognition awards for excellence in achievement in such programs (1979:37).

By acquiring and imparting the knowledge of Francophone world, high school teachers broaden their own horizons as well as those of their students, and this excellent legacy of

education is carried into college education and beyond. After all, a knowledge once acquired is a knowledge for ever, and knowledge that is reactivated through continuous studies becomes living knowledge. Isn't this what education is all about - a continuous but gradual learning process from elementary school to college from childhood to adulthood, and beyond?

Multicultural approach to French language teaching and learning brings a richer and culturally diverse elements into the classroom and makes learning more fun. While it improves people's understanding of other cultures, it is also a faster and more economic way to learn about them. The gap between foreign language education in high schools and colleges or universities must be narrowed until it becomes completely bridged, and a multicultural approach can do this and more.

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FOREIGN LANGUAGE EDUCATION IN THE MIDDLE SCHOOL: A SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHER'S VIEW

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Abstract

Because of the emphasis placed on language and the language process by both Foreign Language and Special Education, one must examine both the theoretical and the methodological similarities between the two areas. Based on my experience as a teacher of Foreign Language, English and Special Education, one common element is very evident: the acquisition of language skills in order to communicate. Even though differences between the students should be noted, what really needs to be examined is the learning process itself. During nineteen years of teaching at the middle school level, the following similarities were noted:

1) Physical Environment—Grouping in a pre-determined arrangement by the teacher thus facilitating discussion and more individualization of instruction.
2) New Skills Development—Introduction of new strategies or adaptation of existing strategies.
3) Learning Word Meanings: Comprehension and Reading—Meaning must be understood as an integral part of the language learning process.
4) Learning to Write—Attempts should be made to gear writing to the age and interest level of the student.
5) Discussion—Techniques should imitate real-life by forcing the student to use what he knows.
6) Cultural Awareness—Understanding the language comes with understanding the people who use it.

Both Foreign Language and Special Education should be student-centered, aiming at increasing the ability to use one's communicative skills to the best of one's ability.

Introduction

As a general rule, most mainstreamed educators have assumed that the special education (SE) student is unable to learn a foreign language (FL). The FL student, however, is believed to be "gifted" or "advanced" due to the privileged status that FL has had in the curriculum. This myth of elitism is explained by Herron (1982: 442), who states that "the popular image of FL study as being primarily for the academically talented student" has tended to limit student enrollment in FL. Both assumptions are false, since both FL and SE deal with the language learning process in its many parts; they do not include and preclude study based solely on academic promise.

There are differences in the two fields which require discussion. Foremost is the difference inherent in the students themselves. Generally, FL students are considered to be of average or above-average intelligence, working on or above grade level, competent in the use of their communicative skills, and lack severe social or emotional problems. The SE students are normally also of average intelligence but are working below grade or age level. This discrepancy between the FL and SE student, if not attributed to any physical cause, is usually due to a gap in the general learning experience, including but not limited to social, emotional, or learning problems. In the middle school, SE has become a haven for the problem child. These are the students who are typically denied access to the FL classroom, primarily due to a lack of understanding concerning the nature of FL. Both SE and FL could help each other by the comparing and sharing of techniques, since they draw on similar processes and methodologies.

DISCUSSION

All fields of study have their own specific methodology including lecture, experimentation, repetition, or a combination thereof. These methods are traditional and have withstood the test of time. Although newer, more innovative approaches are being introduced, these traditional methods continue to hold their place in the educational setting due to teacher unwillingness to change or lack of familiarity with these approaches. Partly as a consequence of this, Nunan (1988:9) states that

> education has a highly developed and long-standing mythology which acts as a protective public image projected by its members. At all levels of the system, what people think they are doing, what they say they are doing, what they appear to others to be doing and what in fact they are doing, may be sources of considerable discrepancy.

In order to "teach" the SE and FL student, some basic philosophical or theoretical principles must be kept in mind. These can best be viewed by examining the theoretical and methodological similarities between SE and FL teaching. It is apparent that acquisition of language skills are common to both groups even though in the middle and high school setting, SE students are not typically enrolled in FL classes. These areas are both concerned with developing the students' ability to communicate verbally or in writing. Because of the similarities of goals, this paper will examine the similarities of methods which have been found to be numerous[1].

The traditional approach, in any subject or field, revolves around the same general principle: the teacher talks or lectures (better known in educational terms as "teaching") while the student uses passive behavior such as listening, and memorization. The student is then required to give back information to the teacher, usually in the form of a discrete-point test. This is an example of Freire's Banking Theory (1985: 22), where specific information is deposited and kept for future use, specifically when asked for by the teacher. This is too often seen in the traditional FL classroom.

Many times, the FL teacher's curriculum is dictated to by a textbook or a committee (in a non-classroom environment) who argues that a certain amount of material should be covered in a given amount of time (i.e., the Delaware FL Curriculum Guide states that a critical core of material for each level should be covered at each level). The result is that instructors lose sight of what the student actually learns in the classroom, regardless of the student's language-learning agenda.

Nunan (1989: 9) states that there is no simple one-to-one relationship between intention and reality in the classroom. As most instructors will admit, the material that any curriculum guide mandates be covered at any level is not always covered. Research (e.g., Chaudron 1988; Krashen 1983; Pieneman 1985;) has under scored the complexity of language learning and teaching and has provided insights into why there are mismatches between what is planned, what actually gets taught, and what learners learn. Nunan continues to explain that mismatches between the various curriculum perspectives can be accounted for, among other things, by speech-processing constraints such as the social, cultural and/or educational influence on individual speech patterns

(see, for example, Pieneman 1985). Thus, speech-processing is a necessary element of second language (L2) acquisition.

SIMILARITIES BETWEEN FL and SE

The teaching of FL aims at the acquisitional process of basic cognitive, linguistic and cultural skills where communication is derived essentially from interaction. According to Rivers (1987:xiii-xiv), interaction implies both reception and expression of messages. What is evident is that during the actual language interaction, restructuring moves (the continuous rephrasing of both questions and answers until the message is understood) on the part of both teacher and learner facilitate the learner's comprehension and production of the target language (Pica 1987: 7). Therefore, demands must be placed on learners to manipulate their current language system so that unclear messages become meaningful ones.

This need to communicate links FL and SE. In the middle school, children are enrolled in SE classes because they lack the basic (but very necessary) skills needed to communicate in the real world or in the artificial setting of a mainstreamed classroom. Such skills include both verbal and non-verbal behavior in a culturally appropriate environment. They need to express themselves so that they can be understood, both socially and professionally; they need to fill out employment applications; they need to write letters or notes; they need to function and in some cases, to survive depending on their environment and their handicapping condition. These are the same skills required in the FL classroom and is one of the many reasons for acquiring a FL—to learn to communicate in a specific setting: a foreign country or the FL classroom.

In both of the above instances, learners are in a similar situation. Both SE and FL students are in need of sociolinguistic remediation in order to learn the necessary communicative skills which they lack. In SE, this learning process is the re-education of a certain skill because the child never learned the skill. In the FL classroom, such acquisition entails not only the end product but also the process of becoming a speaker of the target language.

It goes without saying that re-education is done through remediation. Traditionally, remediation in the FL classroom is simply the continued repetition of the word or phrase by first the teacher and then the student until the material is memorized or learned. This remediation process, the basic premise used in the SE classroom, is traditionally handled differently—repetition in a variety of different contexts or situations until a particular skill is learned. In both the FL and SE classrooms, the traditional use of listen-repeat is being replaced by language USE in a variety of different contexts. Consequently, the two areas are moving closer, thereby facilitating language across the curriculum.

Another felt need in SE and FL is to build memory skills so that students can use certain contextualized information at some later time. In both the FL and SE classroom, the students must recall how to express an idea. This word or idea can be either verbal or nonverbal (a sign or symbol as in the art of writing, art, music, etc.), in addition to the ability to express meaning using a given sociolinguistic system. In this respect, there is no difference between the teaching of a second language and the remedial teaching of the primary language. For this reason, the learning process itself warrants some examination.

LEARNING IN THE FL AND SE CLASSROOM

Based on the underlying philosophy of the two areas, that is, the development of communicative skills, it is interesting to note the similarities of the learning process as used in both the SE and the FL classroom. Both need reinforcement in a new way of learning: the SE students because of possible inappropriateness of their response, and the FL students because they have like reference point in the L2.

Both FL and SE have a varied range of abilities within the classroom as a direct result of insufficient staff and for reasons of scheduling. Both need practical and meaningful activities to help develop these communicative skills. Without encouragement and reinforcement, the students' development may lag behind the expected performance. This occurs because we tend to consider and treat as unimportant those things which have no meaning for us. There must bean obvious link between the activity and the skill being taught in order for the student to learn. Krashen (1983:1) states that

> we acquire language when we obtain comprehensible input, when we understand what we hear or read. Acquisition is based primarily on what we hear and understand.

In addition, interest must be present.

Both the FL and SE students need high-interest activities at varying degrees of difficulty to meet the varying ability levels in both kinds of classrooms; the activities also are a means of giving students maximum exposure to the language. The SE students in need of remediation must be taught as much as possible on a one-to-one basis, since large group instruction does not meet their needs. Such a situation, although highly desirable because of individual learning differences in the FL classroom, does not frequently occur because of classroom size or budget. If the one-to-one pairing is not done, the SE students might get lost somewhere in the learning process. The role of the instructor, then, is to guide the students toward the acquisition of the target language whether a standard first language or an L2.

In order to compensate for the inability of the educational institution to provide an Individualized Educational Program in the FL classroom, cooperative learning has been employed extensively. Because no two individuals are the same, no two children will learn inexactly the same way and at exactly the same time. Nunan (1988: 48) states that one of the greatest problems for the teacher as a curriculum developer is having to construct a coherent program for inappropriately grouped learners. Both groups of students need to determine the pace at which they can best learn and the activities which are of interest to them. A schedule that is set without the prior assessment of students' strengths or weaknesses leads to a curriculum that is bound to fail, since curriculum decisions must be shared by both instructors and students.

The trend in both areas is clearly a student-centered curriculum. FL and SE need to evaluate different methods on a continuing basis to determine which ones are best suited for the individual and the group. Nunan (1988: 115) states that in a language program committed to the direct development of the sorts of skills required by learners outside the classroom, it is vitally important to create as many links as possible between what happens both inside and outside the classroom. This is the spirit of the "Writing Across the Curriculum" movement (see Klein 1991).

As a direct result of this theory, the traditional FL teacher could learn a great deal from observing an SE classroom. Following are some similarities which merit consideration.

1) PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

The first and most obvious similarity is the physical arrangement of the room itself. The desks are normally grouped in a pre-determined arrangement by the teacher. Tradition dictates that the desks are neatly ordered in rows[2]. However, this arrangement is now being replaced by groupings of two desks for SE and three or four desks for FL. Language is used for discussion; a discussion needs a group, therefore the different classroom arrangement. SE students need this grouping arrangement in order to minimize the distraction to the individual and encourage the one-to-one help they need. FL students require such an arrangement for practicing their L2 skills. Oxford, Lavine, and Crookall (1989: 35) state that such changes in classroom structure force the learners to take a larger degree of responsibility for their own learning. Learners naturally start using more social strategies as they find themselves in situations which require communication.

As previously mentioned, group work (Cooperative Learning) is common to SE and FL methodology. With grouping, one is attempting to capitalize on every students' strengths. One might try to group a student who is strong in the desired skill with one who is weak; an outspoken and friendly student would be grouped with a shy one; a good reader with a poor reader. In this way, the students help each other learn, both in a SE and FL setting. Regrouping students and permutations may be necessary in the classroom as instruction moves to a new area: when a new skill is about to be taught and practiced in order to ensure that each student's knowledge and varied innate abilities are used.

2) NEW SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

Both areas attempt to teach new skills through teacher intervention. SE attempts to help the students attain a pre-determined norm for their age group by leading them through the study process. Each student is tested until the exact spot where the study process has stopped becomes apparent; an intervention is then planned so that the student can continue successfully in his attempt to learn. In the FL classroom, the teacher has to provide a comprehensible model to the students at each step in the language learning process. Due to the age at which students are normally introduced to a second language, most individual learning styles have already been internalized. In that a second language is usually foreign to the students' native culture (as opposed to bilingualism in Québec, or parts of the American South and West), a previously successful individual learning style may not be as successful when studying a FL as it is with other academic areas. New strategies need to be introduced or old ones adapted to the new subject being learned. Chamot and Küpper (1989: 13-14) suggest a direct link between knowledge and use of specific learning strategies and affective student performance in FL, and that students vary not only in which strategies they choose to use but also on how they use the chosen strategy. They continue to state that although all students have learning strategies, some students need to be taught not only which strategies to use but also how they are to be used and for which purposes. The use of specific learning strategies is already being taught extensively in the SE classroom and is in the process of adaptation to serve the needs of the FL classroom.

3) LEARNING WORD MEANINGS: Comprehension and Reading

The meaning of language is an inherent part of acquiring linguistic and communicative skills. Throughout the study of FL,meaning must be taught and treated as an integral part of the language learning process; otherwise, a vital part of the foreign language will be lost. Littlewood (1981: 8-12) states that in order to show the student that meaning is important, the communicative nature of language must be emphasized. He suggests activities which aim at helping the learners to develop links with meaning that will later enable them to use the language for communicative purposes. He further states that the realism and relevance of an activity help to sustain the learners' motivation, making the actual learning of the L2 more relevant and show the student the language's probable communicative need in the future.

The FL dictation, a technique that is easily adapted to the SE classroom, is used to check for word recognition and spelling. In the SE classroom, it can still be used to check spelling and word recognition. Reading a loud to students is considered by many experts to be another useful technique by which listening skills are improved[3]. This activity is helpful in that students are better able to summarize information, to listen to word cues, and to answer questions more appropriately. The situation is similar in the FL classroom. The FL students develop a sensitivity to the sound system in addition to formulating an understanding of the (oral) text. The task for the instructor is to find high-interest and level-appropriate reading selections for both the SE and FL classrooms[4].

One way of resolving this concern in FL is to change the material of the activity by using authentic texts. Rings (1986: 203) points out that although the majority of researchers (i.e., Oxford et al. 1989; Dulay et al. 1982) agree that authentic texts should be used, the big question appears to be the definition of what an authentic text is. For the purposes of this paper, an authentic text is a text or excerpt taken from any source, i.e., a current magazine or newspaper that is used without changes. When using an authentic text, questions are usually specific to the ability of the student. The use of factual questions as opposed to inferential ones are meant to help point out the meaning of the text and should help the students understand what they are reading[5].

4) LEARNING TO WRITE

Closely related to the reading process is the writing process. A student who is literate in his first language and who uses sophisticated vocabulary and complex structures may feel a level of frustration when "reverting" to syntactically simple sentences such as 'John is my friend.' At best, this is a legitimate attempt on the part of both the FL student and the SE student who is only on a second-or third-grade writing level. In addition, both students probably struggle to get the correct spelling.

One way to increase the amount of writing done by students and to improve the quality of their writing is to require a diary or daily journal. A diary for the SE student is sometimes used as a form of communication with the teacher in which students write whatever they want. Normally, they write something they want the teacher to know but are reluctant to say aloud. The teacher reads their comments and sometimes answers the student. The only corrections made are for gross grammatical errors which make the meaning unclear. As long as the meaning is clear,

errors notwithstanding, the student is communicating successfully, one of the established goals for both SE and FL. This is a non-threatening way of letting the students practice their writing skills. FL students at the middle school, like all students, need to feel success when writing but are often threatened by the process because they are afraid to fail or write "baby sentences". Therefore, FL students might use a journal in which they simply make a comment about whatever interests them. The comments will become more detailed as the students' vocabulary increases. The teacher may read the entry and comment on the writing not by correcting each mistake but by making remarks which indicate the teacher's understanding of the content. Semke (1984: 200) found that on each of the measures of language ability where there was significant difference among treatments, group 1, which received only comments and not error correction, showed more progress than the groups which received direct correction[6]. She found that correction does not improve students' writing skills in a second language, nor does it increase total competency in that language. These findings coincide with the position of Kelly (1978) that students will seek advice on how to improve the mechanics of their writing when they realize that they are communicating and that someone understands their message. The above non-threatening activity can be performed as a homework assignment or as a daily in-class activity. The main goal is to increase the frequency of writing. This activity is just as challenging for the SE students, whose problem is the lack of the necessary skills needed to record the spoken word, as it is for the FL student who lacks the necessary word to record. Hence, in an effort to communicate, students make linguistic gains, e.g., they refine syntax, build vocabulary, and they communicate in a given context.

5) DISCUSSION TECHNIQUES

Another area of similarity is that of discussion. The SE child has some degree of difficulty in carrying on a focused conversation. One of the reasons for students' being labeled SE is the inability to express themselves and make themselves understood. Strategic Interaction (SI), a method borrowed from FL, is useful to both areas. DiPietro (1988) explains that a scenario in the SI method is an open-ended situation in which the participants decide which direction the action of the scenario will take. This appears to be very difficult for both groups of students. The FL students are in a similar situation in that they do not have the words or expressions needed to express themselves in a way that the scenario can be brought to a logical conclusion. Like real-life situations, the students must use what they know to resolve whichever situation they encounter. The scenario gives students the chance to imitate real life and forces them to use all pertinent knowledge.

In FL, this inability of expression is produced, in large part, by the audio-lingual method (ALM) of instruction. This method is still used to some extent, despite improved methods such as SI and the Natural Approach (see Krashen 1983). Syntax and there combination of forms are central to ALM. The fallacy, common to both FL and SE, in this method is that it does not acknowledge the fact that language is made up of ideas and meaning in context, not just isolated words (see Kemp 1956: 20). Vocabulary is not the key element in the students' ability to express themselves, but rather one of many important components. The most important part of the ability for expression is making use of the vocabulary one has learned to satisfy one's personal goals. This is exactly what takes place when using DiPietro's SI scenarios. The scenario forces students to use their own vocabulary base in order to satisfy their own personal goals.

Language-building textbooks, in any area or language, teach words. This method, which relies on vocabulary development, is a stumbling block to the teaching of language as a means of fulfilling self-constructed goals. They stress the importance of individual words to the point where the functional use of the words is lost. Whether in the first or second language, words cannot and should not be taught in isolation since language is more than just vocabulary words. The crucial ingredient in language acquisition is comprehensible input so that the student can understand language (Krashen 1983: 1).

For example, when teaching articles of clothing in a second language, most traditional textbooks simply list the names of the articles of clothing, give a short dialog (which usually is not relevant) and proceed to a number of directed exercises, probably grammatical in nature. Many students have difficulty remembering these words because they do not need to use the clothing words in order to communicate in these exercises. An activity such as a fashion show requires the use of ideas and allows for recycling of colors (vocabulary), related expressions, and various other structures which emphasize the use of the thought process. Similarly in SE, such an activity greatly aids the students' oral expression. They must not only use words but use them correctly to express ideas, a principle behind Writing Across the Curriculum or Curriculum Based Instruction (see Klein 1991).

Another common activity is the use of Bingo or similar activities when teaching number, letter, or word recognition. This seems unsophisticated to middle schoolers; however, they are not above completing simple math equations in the second language as a class activity. Nor are they above playing word or number Bingo, especially if it is for a reward. Picture cards, which teach vocabulary development, would be better used if the student were asked to describe the picture instead of simply identifying it as is the philosophy behind the Advanced Placement course of study. According to Littlewood (1981: 20) the main purpose of an activity is that learners should use the language they know in order to get meanings across as effectively as possible. The degree to which this is done, of course, depends on the students' level and degree of competence in the language. Competence necessitates the translation of the needed word, and more importantly, the translation of its contextual meaning. Therefore, what needs to be learned is embedded in the activity. In other words, one speaks to act, not acts to speak.

6) CULTURAL AWARENESS

The last area which concerns both FL and SE is cultural awareness. Students in both areas need to be exposed to and taught how to deal with cultural norms. Often, students are placed in SE due to their socially inappropriate behavior. Whatever the covert reason for this behavior, it is usually due to frustration at not being able to express themselves adequately, as was explained previously. Role-playing and scenarios are good methods for teaching culture, especially when enhanced by discussion, films, readings, etc. In FL, cultural similarities and differences are commonly taught[7]. Using scenarios from DiPietro's SI method, students may see the options that they have in any given situation as in the following example:

> John asks his friend, Bob, for the answers to a major history test. John is the star football player and needs to pass this test or he will not be able to play in Saturday's game. Bob can either pretend not to have heard John or he can tell the teacher and risk having the entire

school angry with him for keeping John from playing. Bob was always taught that he should be honest above all else. How is Bob going to resolve his dilemma?

There are a number of options open to Bob. He must find the one that will best resolve the situation so that he can satisfy both his conscience and his wish to have his team win the game.

Because real-life situations do not ensure a pre-determined response by another person, it would appear that in this particular situation, the scenario is a more appropriate teaching method than role-playing. Similarly in FL, scenarios are useful because the student can direct the situation in a direction with which he is most comfortable. Usually, the students opt for the direction in which they can most readily express themselves. If the students falter, help comes from the group. Through group prompting (Cooperative Learning), students can begin to develop good communicative sentences to express their ideas.

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

We have examined several areas of similarities between FL and SE. Both students have a gap in learning--SE in the total learning experience and FL in the L2 acquisition. Both have individual learning styles that require attention. Both need meaningful activities to aid in the total language learning process. Both need individualization in the program. In both areas, we are dealing with the total language process or with one of its many components. Both FL and SE are and should be student-centered fields aimed at increasing the ability to use one's communicative skills to the best of one's ability.

Although there is a wealth of research on elementary and adult learners and L2 acquisition, there is virtually no research on the middle school population. At a time when cutbacks make numbers so important, the SE population should not be ignored as potential students for any FL program.

Some possible areas for future research include the use of resource personnel to assist in the mainstreamed FL classroom. FL should look not only to SE but also to other fields in search of similarities aimed at improving the teaching of FL at all levels, not only the middle school. More research is needed at this level for both L2 acquisition as well as standard language remediation. FL and SE should work together to establish a possible combination of teaching methods which would benefit both fields since both areas are concerned with teaching global language competency.

The implications are clear. Because of the emphasis placed obviously on language and the language process by both the FL and SE theories, both areas should look to each other for help and advice. These are not mutually exclusive fields which are perceived to be opposed one to the other. We should look beyond the assumptions made by these labels and look at each student as an individual.

Endnotes

1. These similarities were noted when all my classes (FL, Engl., and SE) were given the same dictation in exactly the same way. Only the original language of the dictation was translated into the target language. The results were interesting. The FL classes had difficulty following the general idea of the dictation and remembering not only what to write but also how to spell it. The English classes had difficulty with the spelling of some of the words they heard. The SE classes had trouble with both the spelling and with remembering what to write. Noting these results, I attempted to adapt methods from one area to another as the need arose. It appeared that the samething was being taught to all the classes: global language competency.

2. In the old one-room schoolhouse, desks were one piece units with chairs attached to the front of each desk for use by the student sitting directly in front. To make sure that everyone could see the board, students were seated by height. Hence, the orderly rows of desks. This arrangement is still found in many traditional classrooms today.

3. This has been a very useful activity for students in both FL and SE classrooms. Both groups sit and listen attentively to stories as evidenced by their constantly asking to hear another one.

4. In SE, one factor involves, for example, a 14-year-old boy who reads on a third-grade level. He certainly has little motivation to read about a clown at the circus. The problem is finding topics which interest students at this age, such as race-car driving or wrestling, but which will not frustrate them when attempting to read.

5. When teaching English, i.e. The Christmas Carol or The Tell-TaleHeart, I have found that including a vocabulary list and a study guide (a list of specific factual or informational questions) greatly helps the students' comprehension of the plot. Normally, I do not include inferential questions. These are used later for a general discussion of any story (not used for level 1 of any L2).

6. It is interesting to note that students in group 1 believed that there should have been more correction of errors on their work.

7. In some instances, the L2 culture has components that are completely opposite from ours. One example is the European custom of two friends walking down the street either holding hands or arm-in-arm. This is done as a non-verbal expression of friendship. When the FL students are exposed to this custom, they often feel uneasy. They find it difficult to believe that individuals would participate in an activity which is so different from theirs. Another custom is shaking hands by all members of society on introduction, not just business men, as is customary in our society. Our children tend to shy away from touching or being touched in this way.

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GERMAN FOLK DANCES: AN INNOVATIVE TEACHING TOOL

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Abstract

This paper proposes the incorporation of folk dances into the German curriculum on all instructional levels, from Kindergarten to college. Learning and performing folk dances provides the students not only with cultural information about foreign countries but also with specific structural features of the foreign language. The teacher can select certain dances, to teach numbers, prepositions, grammatical cases, imperative forms, etc. Additionally, current publications on the topic of teaching folk dances are evaluated and discussed, including booklets and videos available in the United States.

Introduction

One of the goals in foreign language teaching is communication, requiring as the first step that the students learn the appropriate grammatical structure vocabulary. Communication, in as well as the more advanced levels, however, goes beyond a mere verbal exchange. Kramsch (1983:177) states:

> Because of its interpersonal nature, the communication process is permeated by social and cultural attitudes, values and emotions. Communication is a socialization process that involves the whole personal and social development of the learner. When it takes place in a foreign language it is, in addition, a process of acculturation in which students learn forms of conversational behavior, which are, for the most part, foreign to them.

Traditionally, acculturation is accomplished in the classroom with the help of various audio-visual techniques, in addition to cultural information contained in reading passages and printed conversations. Some textbooks offer children's and folk songs usually placed in an appendix to be used at the discretion of the instructor. Most standard curricula, however, totally neglect folk dances as an important aspect of the culture in the German-speaking countries. At a time when 'cultural literacy' is warranted in the classroom, they are an interesting alternative to the traditional curriculum, suitable to teach not only cultural aspects but also structural features of the foreign language. This paper will demonstrate how the teaching of folk dances can be used in the classroom with children and with young adults in high school and college.

Discussion

The socialization process among children involves, to a large extent, role playing and play acting. Therefore, folk dances for children are very useful to teach them certain aspects of grammar and vocabulary in a playful manner. Some dances, for example, serve the purpose of teaching numbers, either for the counting of a certain number of steps or in connection with physical activities. *Es geht eine Zipfelmuetz* 'A Peaked Cap Walks Around In Our Circle' is a good example. In the second part of the dance, the children have to multiply and add (up to ten). For example,

> *Dreimal drei ist neune, du weisst ja, wie ich's meine, dreimal drei und eins ist zehn, Zipfelmuetz bleibt stehn.*

'Three times three is nine, you know what I mean, three times three plus one is ten, the peaked cap stops walking'.

In the third part of this dance, students act out various physical activities and, therefore, have to be familiar with the meaning of the verbs:

sie ruetteln sich, sie schuetteln sich, sie werf'n die Beine hinter sich, sie klatschen in die Hand...
They shake and they wiggle, they kick up their heels, they clap their hands...

Most children's dances are performed in a circle and can accommodate any number of participants. And since the melody is sung by the children themselves, they learn the foreign words immediately. In other dances, daily activities in the household or in traditional crafts are performed by the children, who learn many action verbs. The dance *Zeigt her eure Fuesschen*, for example, describes in nine verses all the activities required for doing the laundry the old-fashioned way: The children have to demonstrate the washing, rinsing, wringing out, hanging on the clothesline, folding, pressing, and ironing. In the last two verses, they rest up and celebrate their accomplishment by dancing. Several folk dances also include pointing out or describing different parts of the body which must be learned. Some very important grammatical aspects of folk dancing are the dative and accusative case (especially after the two-way prepositions in German) and the imperative forms, whether inherent in the dance itself or used by the caller giving directions. The dancers will not meet their partners, for example, if they don't know the difference between *komm zu mir* 'come to me' and *geh von mir* 'go away from me'. An error could result in total confusion, in one dancer suddenly having two new partners, or the next one having none.

In classes with high school or college students, these structural aspects of the foreign language can still be taught through folk dancing, but information about cultural history can be added regarding the special costumes, the music, different customs, dialects, etc. Folk dances are basically dance forms that have been passed down from generation to generation. Until the beginning of the industrial revolution, they changed relatively little since the lifestyle and working habits of the farmers and craftsmen remained largely the same in the predominately agricultural societies. In the German-speaking countries of today, traditional folk dances are still performed at certain holidays and festivals, intricately linked to old customs and religious faith. These folk or regional festivals are based on local calendars for traditional agriculture events, on religious holidays, or on milestones in the course of human lives, such as the birth of a child, coming of age, courtship, or marriage. Folk dances are also performed here in the United States in areas with a large population of German, Austrian, or Swiss ancestry, such as Pennsylvania, Michigan, Wisconsin, and the Baltimore-Washington area.

In most European countries, there are two basic groups of folk dances: Ritual-ceremonial dances, and so-called "social" dances. The first group is usually performed by men only, and is typically associated with local customs throughout the course of the year. Examples are special dances during the winter carnival season, at Easter time, the dance around the maypole, the midsummer festival, and at harvest time. Certain dances can require special costumes, such as the frightening masks and outfits of the mummers. Frequently, members of certain trades and craft guilds perform dances in their colorful costumes that illustrate their professional activities, such as the woodcutters or lumberjacks of the Alpine region, the miners in Suabia.

The so-called "social dances," on the other hand, are performed by the population as a whole, understood as the celebration of a communal get-together, not in the sense of "social or ballroom dances." This kind of dance must accommodate both sexes and all age groups, since the children learn the dances by mimmicking their elders. Usually, the older people in the community lead the dances which are always accompanied by music or song. In our times, the music is frequently played by cassettes, but the traditional way is a live band of varying size. Typical instruments for folk music and folk dancing are violin (fiddle), recorder and flute, clarinet, guitar, harmonica, and brass instruments. These dances can be performed in two different ways. The most common one is danced by larger groups of males and females, sometimes including children, usually in a circle and with a "caller." The other kind is performed by a certain number of male-female pairs of dancers. From the sixteenth century on, the names of the older dances reveal their geographic or national origin: *Steirischer* from Austria, Viennese Waltz, Czech or Polish polka, Polish or French polonaise, etc.

The polonaise is the simplest form of a folk dance where any number of individual dancers can participate by walking around the room to the tune of a polonaise or a hiking song, such as "The Happy Wanderer." The "marchers" meet at the end of the room, walk back in pairs or groups of four, and walk in several geometric patterns. The next group in terms of increasing difficulty is the children's dances which I use to introduce my college students to folk dancing.[1] Later, we progress to regular adult folk dances in the "social" category in order to let any number of students participate.

For each new dance, I prepare the students by giving them the relevant cultural background, including the geographic area, the objects or tools used for the dance, if any, and the meaning of the dance. If the melody is to be sung by the dancers, I prepare a list of the new words and explain their meaning in this particular context. Then, the class practices the different dance steps without music to gain a feel for the movements and the rhythm. Next, the students dance the separate parts with music, and, finally, perform the complete dance in an uninterrupted fashion.

There are presently some very useful booklets and videos available in this country for the teaching of German folk dances.

1. *Zum Singen und Tanzen - The Song and Dance Book for Students of German* (1987) is divided into two parts and contains 23 songs for various occasions, and five folk dances. The dances range from the relatively easy *Siebenschritt* to the difficult *Schuhplattler*. They are described in simple terms, and sometimes show the formation in a diagram. The explanations are provided entirely in English.

2. *Volkstaenze* (no date) offers eleven dances, from *Herr Schmidt* to the *Schuhplattler* that are arranged in order of increasing difficulty. The booklet provides extensive and clear definitions and explanations of the basic terminology, the different formations of the dancers, and the individual steps. It is written entirely in German and well suited for the high school and college level.

3. Perhaps the best available teaching tools, are the two videos *German Folk Dances* (1987 and 1989) where students from Clear Creek Secondary School in Idaho Springs, Colorado, present Austrian, German, and Swiss dances in authentic costumes and take the viewer literally step by

step through all phases of the dances. Each kit contains the video cassette and an audio cassette with voice instructions during the dances on one side and the uninterrupted dance only on the other side (for performance in public). Also included is a booklet containing very useful hints on teaching folk dancing, cultural information and costume notes, and written instructions for each dance. The booklets are written in English and give detailed instructions which are then reinforced by observing the dancers who demonstrated the steps and movements. Both videos show one dance each from Austria, Germany, and Switzerland at varying levels of difficulty.[2] In addition to these materials, there are many recordings and publications of folk dances available in Germany and Austria.

Conclusion

This paper described how the teaching of folk dances can aid in one aspect of the acculturation process in the foreign language classroom. An advantage of this method is that it is not restricted to any one age level, and it can be incorporated into curricula from kindergarten to graduate school. Beyond school, dancers can join one of the many clubs in the United States whose main purpose is to learn and perform Austrian, German, and Swiss folk dances. As López (1989:2) writes in her "Notes to the Teacher":

> We all know how much folk dances are a part of a foreign culture. Not only are they an important element of foreign festivals and celebrations today, but they teach us much about the history, geography, attitudes, traditions and daily lives of foreign people. By actually doing a folk dance the student will be learning about the foreign culture without ever taking out a pen and paper - and he will remember it longer, too.

She also notes (1989:16) that "Dancing has been and still is an integral part of German celebrations. There are many types of folk dances but they share a common element of fun".

Endnotes

1. However, I do *not* tell my students that they are performing *children's* dances; I simply tell them that these are very easy to learn and to do.

2. The videos are well edited and suitable for high school and College students.

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HOW CAN A MESS BE FINE? POLYSEMY AND READING IN A FOREIGN LANGUAGE

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Abstract

This article discusses polysemy in terms of foreign language reading and vocabulary development. For some foreign language readers, polysemy can be a major source of difficulty in the comprehension of text, even more so than a lack of vocabulary knowledge. Research with non-native readers of English has indicated that even advanced readers, upon encountering words with multiple meanings, may ascribe previously learned meanings to the words even though the meanings are quite incongruent with the context in which the words are found. This often resulted in strange interpretations that were inconsistent with the rest of the story.

Pedagogical implications of polysemy in regards to the interrelationships between reading and vocabulary development are discussed. The strengths and weaknesses of various vocabulary development activities, such as activities to sensitize learners to common concepts underlying different polysemous meanings of a particular word, are outlined. In conclusion, the article stresses the importance of helping the learner learn ways to develop not only a breadth but also a depth of vocabulary knowledge, as well as further development of the learner's cognitive and metacognitive reading skills, so that the language learner will be better prepared to deal with the problems of polysemy when reading in a foreign language.

Introduction

Polysemy is one of the multitude of aspects of language that foreign or second language learners have to deal with when comprehending text. Not only must learners be concerned with what they don't know as they process and try to comprehend foreign language text, but they also may sometimes have to watch out for what they do know. In the comprehension of foreign language text, it is not always so much a matter of what the readers do not understand, but what they think they understand yet misinterpret, that negatively influences their interpretation of the text. In particular, the selection of different polysemous meanings of some words other than what the author had intended can have a significantly negative impact upon a reader's interpretation of foreign language text.

A recent experience with non-native readers of English served to illustrate just how much of a factor polysemy can be in the comprehension and interpretation of foreign language text. While conducting research on the reading abilities and skills of adult learners of English as a Second Language (ESL), the author noticed some difficulties that a subject was having when he encountered words with multiple meanings in the text. The title of this article, for example, comes from a comment made by this subject when he encountered a sentence in the text that read, "They'll make a fine mess on my poor carpets." Knowing only the meaning of "fine" as "of high quality" or "beautiful", the subject tried (unsuccessfully) to figure out how a mess could be considered a good thing, not realizing that "fine" had another meaning in this context, that of "terrible, awful".

I began noticing other subjects having problems with this and other polysemous words in the text. One subject even commented at the end of a passage that a major problem he had with reading in English was interpreting a word a certain way and later finding out that the meaning that he had assigned was wrong:

> When I read in Korean, I can have quite an accurate thought on each word, but when I read in English, even though I understand the meaning, I don't quite understand which meaning I should apply in any given situation among many possible meanings, because every word has many different meanings, depending on different situations. So when I read in English, just reading the text once, I don't quite understand what the story is about, because I am not sure when to choose which particular meaning to where, so I don't get the whole concept...

From these indications of the potential for multiple meanings of words to cause problems in reading, I decided to analyze the data from the subjects' protocols further for misinterpretations due to assigning the wrong meaning to words and investigate this potential for multiple meanings of words to negatively affect the comprehension of foreign language text.

This article is the result of this investigation into polysemy and reading in a foreign or second language. After a brief clarification of the definition of polysemy and a look at the limited amount of research that has been done on polysemy and reading, the results of this investigation will be presented and discussed, with implications for the foreign or second language classroom identified and discussed.

Definitions, Problem, and Purpose

It may be helpful to first take a look at exactly what is meant by polysemy and to distinguish it from the phenomenon of homonymy. Polysemy is the phenomenon of one word with more than one meaning, but usually with some aspect of these meanings common across contexts. For example, the word "line" can be associated with drawing, fishing, or railways; all three meanings share physical properties of material covering space between two points, and the different senses of the word are close. (Carter 1987: 11-12). Homonymy is the phenomenon of words that have the same form but different, unrelated meanings. For example, the word "bank" can refer to a financial institution or the edge of a river, or the word "race" can refer to a people or a sporting event. The different meanings of such homonymous words are "so distant as to be only arbitrarily related through the formal identity of the word" (Carter 1987: 11-12).

One meaning of a polysemous word may be more central or dominant than other meanings. Though the word "foot" can be a part of the body, a base of something, or a measurement, the first meaning may be perceived as central for most speakers (McCarthy 1990). According to McCarthy, (1990: 25) the meanings of polysemous words that are commonly perceived as central or dominant may not be the ones that occur most frequently but are powerful:

> the power of the central meaning and its transferability across languages may be important features in how words are learnt and how different senses are felt to relate to the center or periphery of a word's meaning potential.

When processing written text, readers have to sometimes figure out which sense or meaning a particular word may refer to. Often the central or dominant meaning, the one that readers are

often familiar with, is the one that readily comes to mind. The main problem with polysemy is that some readers may experience difficulties when encountering words they are familiar with that have unfamiliar meanings in reading tasks. Johnson and Pearson (1978), speaking about problems of some children when encountering polysemous words, state that distortion of the text may result is the reader is not aware of other meanings for a word and do not use the context to help figure out the meaning of the word:

> A problem we have noted with many poorer readers is one we call 'word rigidity'. Simply, some children learn a meaning for a word and do not realize that the word has several other meanings. If they have not learned the various meanings and if they are not skilled at using contextual analysis, their comprehension of a passage can become severely distorted.

In fact, the danger of misinterpretation or distortion of the when encountering familiar words with different meanings may be greater than when encountering unfamiliar words. Deighton (1959) considers the difficulties of some readers in recognizing that familiar meanings of words may not fit in with the context in which they are found:

> Vocabulary may be extended by expanding meanings of words which seem quite familiar. These words, which seem so simple, so common, probably cause as much reading difficulty and as much failure in interpretation as all the unfamiliar words together. Common words may be used in new and strange combinations requiring the reader to adjust his understanding of them. The danger of misinterpretation is greater with the familiar words. The reader will recognize the unfamiliar word and be fully aware that he doesn't know its meaning. However, he may be quite unaware that the context makes the most frequent meaning of a familiar word quite unsuitable.

The distinctions between the dominant and derived meanings of polysemous words may be unclear, even in context, since the meanings are related. With homonymy, however, the problem may not be as significant, as the meanings are so categorically distinct that the context usually provides enough information to determine which of the alternative meanings is appropriate to the context in which the word is encountered (Durkin, Crowther, and Shire 1986).

Though polysemy may cause problems for child native language readers, as discussed above, how about for adult readers of a foreign or second language? The purpose of this study is to investigate the effects that encounters with multiple meaning of words may have upon the interpretation or comprehension of English text by adult non-native speakers. Toward this end, the main questions asked in this study are:

1. Is polysemy a potential source of comprehension difficulty among adult readers of a foreign language at advanced levels of reading and language proficiency? Do such readers have problems using contextual clues to recognize when a particular meaning they have chosen conflicts with information in the text?

2. How does the selection of alternative meanings of words that are inappropriate to the context affect the interpretation of the information in the immediate context of the word in the text? What is the nature of the effect that the assignment of inappropriate meanings may have upon the comprehension of the text overall? Is there a potential for adult foreign language readers to distort information in the text to fit the inappropriate meaning of a word?

Though adult readers may not have the problem of "word rigidity" that child readers with poor reading skills may have, as described by Johnson and Pearson, they may not be as skilled in their second or foreign language in using contextual clues to recognize when they have chosen an inappropriate meaning of a word or to choose between alternative meanings in a particular context. The problem may even be worse for foreign or second language readers than native-language readers, as problems with choosing the appropriate meaning of a word in a context may be exacerbated by problems with processing the language in the context as well as problems in transferring strategies and skills in using the context to infer meanings of words or disambiguate between more than one possible meaning.

Also, in looking at non-native language readers' interpretation of words in context, it is expected that encounters with polysemous words may affect foreign or second language reader's comprehension more than encounters with homonyms. As mentioned above with native-speaking readers, the different meanings of homonyms are distinct enough that the context may more clearly support one of the meanings. With polysemous words, the context may not serve to make distinctions between meanings as clear, since the different meanings are related.

Review of Studies on Polysemy and Comprehension

Studies on the effects of polysemous words on comprehension have been very limited to date. This section will summarize the results of three such studies: two among native-language children and one among adult foreign language readers. These studies, though limited, give some idea as to the extent of the problems that readers in general may experience when encountering polysemous words in comprehending written text.

One study by Crowther, Durkin, and Shire (1982) investigated children's use and understanding of relational terms, such as "up," "down," "high," "low," "above," "below," etc., used in describing relations in mathematics and music that are derived from core meanings used to describe spatial relationships. They found that their subjects tended to interpret such words in terms of their core, spatial senses rather than the derived meanings used in mathematics and music. For example, in one context, child native-language subjects (age 5 to 13) watched a videotape of a ghost ascending or descending a staircase while notes ascended or descended on the soundtrack. The subjects were asked to identify the direction of pitch of a sequence of notes where the aural information was, in some instances, congruent with visual information provided simultaneously, and, in other cases, incongruent. They found that in the mismatched condition in which the visual and aural cues were incongruent, the visual cues dominated, indicating that the children rely on the spatial sense of the polysemous terms used here when the evidence is unclear or confusing. They concluded that there existed a bias among some native-language children towards core meanings than derived meanings in comprehension of polysemous vocabulary.

Mason, Kniseley, and Kendall (1979) found a failure of native-language elementary school subjects to select less-common meanings of words in sentence contexts that supported the less common meanings. In this study, the subjects read polysemous words in sentences and were asked to identify the their meanings and later recall the words and contexts. They found that when words were placed in contexts which supported their most common meanings, subjects remembered the words and were more accurate in selecting the appropriate meaning than when

the contexts supported the less common meanings. They concluded that polysemy in reading tasks may cause difficulties in comprehension among children in the middle elementary grades, due to their lack of knowledge of less common meanings of words or their failure to attend to the necessary contextual cues.

In the lone study found by the author that deals with polysemy and reading in a foreign or second language, Bensoussan and Laufer (1984) studied the ability of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) adult readers to guess the meanings of words from context. In the study, sixty EFL students were asked to translate seventy words from English to Hebrew, first in a word list and then, a week later, in a long text. They found that one of the problems that their subjects had in incorrectly guessing the meanings of words in contexts was the failure of the subjects to correctly guess different meanings of polysemous words in unfamiliar contexts due to preconceived notions about familiar words. In a later article, Bensoussan (1986:404) spoke further about the treachery of familiar words:

> Some words are difficult because they are unfamiliar. Other words are treacherously familiar, but, used in unfamiliar contexts, they shift in meaning and may thus block comprehension of the text.

These few studies have indicated the potential for polysemous words to have negative effects upon the comprehension of text. Clearly more research is needed on such effects among readers in general and foreign or second language readers in particular since, as mentioned earlier, the problem may be even more acute among readers of foreign text. This study is an attempt to address this need and add to the limited knowledge of the effects of polysemy upon reading in a foreign or second language.

The Study

The research conducted in this descriptive study was qualitative in nature. The goal of the study was to investigate and describe the problems non-native adult readers may have in the comprehension and interpretation of second language text, particularly when the source of the problems or difficulties is polysemous words. Ten subjects for this study were selected from a convenience sampling of Korean graduate students studying at the University of California at Berkeley and the University of Texas at Austin who volunteered for this study. Subjects with relatively advanced language and reading proficiency were selected, with overall Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) scores of the subjects ranging from 577 to 603 and scores on the reading section of the TOEFL ranging from 59 to 61. The reading selection used in this study was a short story of over 1200 words: "The Open Window," by H. H. Munro. Munro's story concerned a man, Framton Nuttel, who had gone to a rural retreat for a "nerve cure". The story takes place at the house of a woman, Mrs. Sappleton, and her niece Vera, whom Nuttel had come to visit. His sister had given him letters of introduction to these and other people she knew. Framton meets the niece first, who tells him a story about how her aunt's husband and two brothers had died while hunting three years ago. She drew Framton's attention to some open French windows, telling him that her aunt refused to believe that her husband and brothers were dead. She kept the windows open everyday waiting for them to return and walk through them as they had always done before. The aunt then made her appearance and began talking of her husband and brothers as if they were alive and would return at any moment. Later, upon looking

out the open windows, the aunt announced that her husband and brothers were returning. Framton, looking out the window and seeing three figures approaching with a small hunting dog, ran away in terror, believing them to be the ghosts of the husband and brothers. The niece had been lying to Framton all along, however. She then made up a story about Framton's phobia about dogs as the reason why he had run away, in order to cover up her involvement in Framton's terror-stricken retreat. The story informed the reader that telling tales such as these was the niece's specialty.

For the post-reading part of the study, the story was divided into 57 blocks. Each block corresponded to one sentence, utterance, or question/response sequence in the story. A set of detailed questions about each block (for a total of 83 questions) were asked of each subject. For the focus on polysemous words in this particular aspect of the study, the questions served to elicit further information about the subjects' understanding of the text overall and of individual words. A verbal report protocol, a Think-Aloud task, was utilized in order to obtain on-line data on the interpretations of the subjects as they were processing information in the text. The subjects were tested individually and, after the steps of the study were explained and demonstrated using a sample story, were asked to read silently Munro's story. Twenty places were identified and marked in the story as points where the subjects were asked to report what they were thinking. Subjects were not forced to report anything at these places; they could report whenever they had something to say. These 20 places were analyzed as points at which inferences were likely to be made.

Subjects were asked to report what they were thinking at any point in the story that they became aware of any thoughts that they had at that time. Although they were asked to stop momentarily at each of the 20 marked points and report any thoughts, they were instructed that they were not required to stop and think about the story, just report any thoughts if they were aware of any at these points. If not, they were to continue reading.

The subjects were allowed to report in whichever language (English, Korean, or a combination of both) that they felt comfortable in reporting at any particular time. They were allowed to look back at any portion of the text they had already read, but were instructed not to look ahead. They were allowed to look up words in either an English to Korean or an English dictionary, and there was no time restriction on their reading of the story.

The post reading activity was then given orally in English, with translations into Korean whenever necessary. The subjects were permitted to answer in English or Korean.

Each subject took an average of three hours to complete the study. All of the data from the Think-Aloud task and the post-reading questions were recorded, translated, and transcribed. A qualitative analysis was done on the verbal report data to identify interpretations that the subjects had made and identify any problems that subjects may have had in processing polysemous words. Misinterpretations that subjects made were analyzed as to the source of the misinterpretation. Misinterpretations caused by the selection of a particular meaning of a polysemous word that was inappropriate in the context were identified, and the type and extent of the effect that the selection of inappropriate meanings had upon the local and global comprehension of the text was analyzed. A qualitative analysis was done of the answers of the subjects to the post-reading questions to get more detailed information about the subjects' interpretations of the story.

Qualitative Results of the Study

The data from the subjects' verbal report protocols indicate that half of the subjects had problems at one time or another with different meanings of polysemous words in the text. The problems arose when the subjects selected alternative meanings of polysemous words that were different than what the author had intended. The following is a description and analysis of such problems and the effects that these difficulties due to polysemous words had upon these subjects' comprehension of the text.

One sentence in the story in which the character of the aunt complained that her husband and brothers would make a "fine mess" on her carpets caused problems for two subjects. As mentioned earlier, one subject couldn't understand how a mess could be "fine". Another subject, "A", misinterpreted this in the sense of the husband and brothers having a good meal:

> .. they will have dinner or something like that, because it says here 'make a fine mess on my poor carpets', so they are gathered, returning from the mountain, they will eat something or enjoy something together.

This misinterpretation is due to the fact that the subject looked up the word "mess" in his Korean dictionary and picked the wrong interpretation, thinking "mess" meant "meal", as in "mess hall", as this meaning of "mess" would collocate with his interpretation of the word "fine", whereas the other meaning of the word would not. Since many Koreans eat sitting on the floor, he saw nothing strange about "making a fine meal on the carpet".

The story mentioned the word "nerve" three times: once in the context of "nerve cure", once in the context of "it got on her nerves" (meaning irritation), and once in the context "lose one's nerve" (meaning to become scared). One subject, "B", read all three references to "nerve" as in the sense of "mental pressure." In the part where the story mentioned about a habit of one brother that had always gotten on the aunt's nerves, the subject inferred that the aunt's mental health had been bad before the husband and brothers had died:

> This woman, the aunt's mental health must have been bad even before her husband died. You see here...because it got on her nerves.

Reading the part that refers to Framton's losing his nerve, the same subject inferred that Framton himself was crazy:

> It's quite contrary from what I had thought, but the real crazy person is Framton, not Mrs. Sappleton...Yes, Nuttel is crazy.

It seems that throughout the text, the subject focused on only one meaning of the word "nerve", while the text itself contained three different senses of the word.

Perhaps the best example of how the determination of an inappropriate meaning of a polysemous word can affect the interpretation of a text concerns the word "romance" in the last sentence of the story: "Romance at short notice was her specialty." The selection of other meanings of this word besides that intended by the author contributed directly to the overall misinterpretations of the story by two subjects, "A" and "D". "D" interpreted this word as

meaning "love" or "love affair", inferring that Framton Nuttel and the aunt were having a love affair:

> That [the sentence] means maybe Mr. Nuttel is a boyfriend of the aunt.

Consequently, this subject disconfirmed or changed much of her previous inferences and interpretations, reinterpreting the story in terms of an affair between the aunt and Framton. Throughout the recall and post-reading questions, she reinterpreted everything in terms of this inference, concluding that their affair was a secret that Framton was trying to hide, that the niece suspects and is trying to find out more, that the aunt may have been tired of her husband and perhaps wanted him to die, that the aunt was afraid that the husband would find out about the affair, that the niece told made up the story about why Framton ran away in order to cover up for her aunt, etc.

Subject A also chose a different meaning that affected his overall interpretation of the story. He even looked up the word in an English dictionary and, choosing the connotation of "fantasy", confirmed a previous inference that the appearance of the three figures had been an illusion, an hallucination:

> According to this sentence, the whole situation is just an illusion of Mrs. Sappleton...

Having initially thought that the aunt might have been hallucinating but then disconfirming this inference and inferring that the situation of the husband's return was real, the subject once again interpreted the husband's return as the aunt's illusion.

The selection of the right meaning of the word as "fiction" by two other subjects, "B" and "F", contributed heavily to their final interpretation that the girl had made up the story and fooled Framton, the major point of the story:

> She wanted to tease him [Framton]...she made up a story like this...she made a complete fool of Framton... (Subject B) "You know, this kid made up the whole story to everybody's surprise...[the sentence] means that this kid often lies like that. (Subject F)

Until their encounter with this last sentence, these two subjects had not made this interpretation, and the reading of this last sentence was sort of like an "a ha!" experience for them, as it finally helped put everything together into an interpretation that would account for all the character's' physical and verbal behavior up to that point. Though, as usually is the case, inferences and interpretations made early in the reading had a significant effect upon these subject's interpretation of the story, the interpretation of this final sentence, with the key word "Romance", had a great effect upon these subjects' final overall interpretation of this story.

A selection of the meaning of "recovery" as in the sense of one's body recovering from an illness or accident instead of the physical act of recovering a body from a swamp or bog had a significant effect upon the interpretation of the story by another subject, "I". The niece's story about the tragedy never said directly that the husband and brothers had died, but that they had been "engulfed in a treacherous piece of bog " and that their "bodies were never recovered ". It is the last word in the latter phrase that posed a problem for "I", as he interpreted the meaning

of the word "recovered " in terms of recovering their health, not physically getting their bodies back out of the bog:

> I don't think it was possible to recover her husband and kid's injured bodies back to normal. At any rate, her kid's and kid's dad no longer have normal physical condition, they became almost handicapped people and stayed that way...

Even in the post-reading part of the report, the subject maintained that the three had "lost their normal condition, became handicapped." This interpretation of the word in this manner led the subject to interpret a reason for the window being kept open that was contrary to that explicitly stated by the text:

> I think the reason why they kept that window open is to reminisce about the good old days...that is why the window is kept open, to bring back all the memories they have.

As well, the subject inferred that the aunt often spoke of how they had gone out that day because "she takes pleasure by helping and consoling their pain by bringing good old memories." Ultimately, not getting that the niece had said that they all three had died contributed to the subject's failure to not realize that the niece had been lying about the tragedy all along.

The word "retreat" in this sentence also could have posed a problem for Subject A. The first reference to this word in the story was in terms of Framton's migration to a "rural retreat". Later in the story, the word "retreat" was used again, in the connotation of "flight": "...the hall-door, the gravel-drive, and the front gate were dimly noted stages in his headlong retreat." Here, the subject failed to comprehend that Framton had run away from the house; with the phrase worded this way, and with the explicit reference to "retreat" taken in the sense as the earlier reference to "retreat", it appears that the subject may have interpreted the reference to the door, drive, and gate as parts of this "rural retreat" instead of stages in his "headlong retreat", which contributed to the subject's failure to comprehend that Framton was running away. This failure led the subject, upon reading the next sentence about a cyclist running into the hedge to avoid collision, to infer once again that the aunt was hallucinating. He correctly interpreted the linguistic information in this sentence, but, in not knowing that Framton was running away, did not know how to integrate this information with the story, so he seems to have assumed that this was an hallucination:

> [this sentence] means that it could well be possible that she [the aunt] is having a fit, this is her hallucination, and even the niece and Framton are hallucinating for a short time...what I see from these sentences, it seems to me that both of them are hallucinating...

The inference that Framton and the niece also may have been hallucinating, together with the linguistic information in the last sentence, contributed to this subject's final interpretation that the appearance of the husband and brothers was all an hallucination.

One subject, "C", had a problem with the word "soul" in the context of "not speak to a living soul". The subject seems to have interpreted "soul" in terms of its more central meaning of the spiritual, non material part of the body:

> ...because it says here 'soul', this word gives me a feeling that he wants to get to know real deeply. He likes to know people more deeply than just on a superficial level.

This interpretation may have influenced somewhat her interpretation of the sentence where Framton was wondering whether Mrs. Sappleton was one of the nice people his sister had spoken about. The subject continued on to infer that Framton was concerned with knowing people: "this is just my hunch...when he [Framton] meets a person, he wants to know if that person is a good-natured person or a bad-natured person...He doesn't want to deal with bad-natured people, he only wants to have a relationship with good-natured people."

Discussion of the Results

The results of this study indicate that problems and difficulties in the comprehension of text due to the polysemous nature of words that readers encounter in the text may not be limited to young, developing or poor readers. It appears from the data from the subjects' protocols that the potential exists for polysemous words to have negative effects upon the comprehension of foreign or second language text by proficient, adult non-native readers. Five of the ten subjects in this study experienced problems with the determination of the meaning of one or more polysemous words that was appropriate to the context in which the word was encountered. Some of these problems led to significant misinterpretations of the story.

It appears that these five subjects in particular were not always able to use clues from the context to judge how well particular meanings chosen for some polysemous words fit in with the rest of the text. For example, "C's" interpretation of the word "soul" was incongruent with the context in which the word was found. It may be that the first context, "not speak to a living soul", may have been insufficiently disambiguating to make it clear that the meaning of soul that the subject ascribed to the word was inappropriate to the context. However, the word "soul" appeared a little later in the story in the response "Hardly a soul" to the niece's question to Framton, "Do you know many of the people round here?" This context should have made clear that the meaning of "soul" as the spiritual, non-material part of the body was inappropriate, yet the subject did not seem to pick up on these clues from the context. The subject was unable to infer the correct meaning of "soul" as "person" from either of these contexts.

Another example of some subjects' inabilities to use clues from the context to disambiguate between different meanings of a particular word is "I's" determination of the meaning of "recover". In one sense, it seems understandable that there may be some confusion to a non-native reader as to the meaning of "recover" in the context of the word "bodies"; both meanings of the word include the sense of getting back something, either one's health or some material thing. However, the context preceding and following implicitly stated that the men had died and explicitly stated that the men had never returned, yet the subject interpreted this part as the men having returned as handicapped. In short, the subject failed to notice clues (syntactic as well as semantic) that implied that his interpretation of the word "recover" as return to one's health was inappropriate.

The main point is that these and other examples from the subjects' protocols indicate that, like the young readers Pearson and Johnson (1978) spoke of, these subject had difficulties using the context to figure out the appropriate meaning when encountering polysemous words in the

text. This suggests the possibility that even relatively proficient adult foreign language readers may sometimes encounter difficulties in analyzing and using contextual information in the determination of appropriate meanings in foreign language text, which may lead to distortions of the interpretations of the text.

Among the examples of negative effects of the selection of inappropriate meanings of polysemous words upon comprehension, there was a range of degrees to which the polysemous words affected the interpretation of the text. In many of the instances, such as the interpretations of the words "soul," "fine," and "retreat," the negative effects upon the comprehension of the text was limited to distortions in the interpretation of the immediate context in which the words were encountered. The inappropriate selection of meanings of some words, such as "recovered," had negative effects upon the interpretation of more extended parts of the text. Sentences that were contrary to the interpretation influenced by the selection of the meaning of the word "recovered" as getting back one's health, such as explicit statements by the niece that the men never returned or that the aunt, in her delusion, had for three years thought they would return, were either ignored or distorted by the subject to fit in with his interpretation. The interpretation of the aunt as waiting for her dead husband and brothers to return, with the implication that she was mentally abnormal, is a central element in the story that greatly influences later parts of the story. This subject failed to make these interpretations, in large part due to the interpretation that the husband and brothers were alive, but that their health had never recovered and they were now handicapped.

The inappropriate interpretation of the word "romance", as mentioned above, had even more of a global effect upon the comprehension of the text. As well as contributing to the distortion by Subject D of the immediate context in which the word was found (in leading the subject to interpret "her" in the sentence as referring to the aunt when it clearly referred to the niece), it contributed to her distortions of the interpretations of numerous other parts of the text, as briefly described in the results section. It led her basically to reconsider her overall interpretation of the entire text. For two other subjects, the appropriate interpretation of the word as "fiction" was the crucial piece of the developing puzzle that served to put the whole story together.

Conclusions and Implications

Although the limitations of this study, in terms of the type and size of the sample and the lack of replication with other stories, prohibit the generalization of these results to the general population of foreign language readers, the study does serve to portray the potential for polysemous words to negatively affect the comprehension of foreign language text by non-native readers. It indicates that some foreign or second language readers may experience difficulties in using the context to determine and select the appropriate meanings of polysemous words. It shows that the degrees to which selections of inappropriate meanings of polysemous words may affect or distort the interpretation of text range from negative effects upon local parts of the text in which the words are found to effects upon global parts of the text, depending upon factors such as association of the misinterpreted word with central elements or themes of the text, strategies readers employ to deal with inconsistencies with these interpretations and later information in the text (whether they ignore the contradictions, transform the information in the text to fit in with the misinterpretation, or whether they question and/or disconfirm the previous misinterpretation), etc.

More research is needed to determine the scope of the problems polysemy may pose for foreign and second language readers at varying levels of reading and language proficiencies. Why may some readers have more problems in dealing with the polysemous nature of words than other readers? Are impulsive readers or readers who are bigger risk-takers more prone to problems with polysemous meanings? What factors may serve to exacerbate or mitigate negative effects of misinterpretations due to polysemous words upon comprehension of the text? How much of a problem does polysemy pose for readers in other languages besides English? The issues raised by these and other questions dealing with polysemy seem worthy of further study, particularly when so little research has been done to date.

However, some general, preliminary implications can be drawn from this and other studies concerning polysemy and reading mentioned above. Some foreign and second language readers may need to become more aware of and sensitive to the potential for the words they encounter to have more than one meaning. Though activities to teach multiple meanings of words to students exist, such as definition or usage activities, definition matching and sentence matching activities, and sentence writing activities (Dale and Johnson 1978: 43), there are simply too many words that have multiple meanings to realistically consider direct teaching of various meanings of specific words. Johnson and Pearson (1978) estimate that 72% of the words in the Ginn lexicon of 9,000 words have multiple meanings. Rather than trying to teach many of these words to English as a Foreign or Second Language students directly, sensitizing learners to the potential for encountering polysemous words frequently in the English language and teaching students how to deal with polysemous words would seem more useful for EFL and ESL students. Advice that Graves (1987: 178) gives for teachers of native language young readers may be appropriate as well to foreign and second language readers:

> Students need to learn that a great many words have multiple meanings, that polysemous words can constitute a source of difficulty in their reading, and that some words have specialized meanings in particular subject areas. (p. 178)

This advice seems particularly appropriate to younger EFL or ESL learners who may not have had much experience with polysemy in their own language, much less in their foreign or second language.

As one way of sensitizing and helping foreign and second language readers deal with polysemy, Nation (1990) suggests activities that demonstrate common underlying features of various related meanings of polysemous words:

> By drawing attention to the presence of all these features of meaning in whatever use of the word is being taught, the other uses of the word will be more readily learned....If it is not easy to show how the various uses of a word are related to ideas that apply to all uses then the learning burden of the word is heavy. If the various uses can be related to common ideas the learning burden is light. (pp. 41-42)

Nation recommends using such activities to help students, when they learn a vocabulary word in class, to develop a sense of underlying meanings that may be common to other meanings of that particular word. One way to do this is an exercise developed by Visser (1989) to help foreign and second language learners construct underlying meanings of the different senses of polysemous words. One example of this that Nation (1990: 42) provides is given below:

Column 1	Column 2	
If you *release* a person or animal that has been in captivity, you set them free. Give a reason why a prisoner might be released. (Nation, 1990, p. 42)	*Release* is a feeling that you have of no longer suffering or having to worry about something. Describe a time when you have had a feeling of release.	Say what the similar ideas/ features are in Columns 1 and 2.

These type of activities are ways one can directly help students become aware of polysemy and certain underlying concepts of words. However, we also have to help our students learn how to deal with polysemy when they encounter it, particularly in reading. The best way we can help our foreign or second language learners learn to cope with polysemy in reading is simply to help them develop or transfer effective reading skills and strategies in general. Some of the problems that the subjects in the study reported on earlier involved making erroneous interpretations or inferences that were influenced by the selection of inappropriate meanings for certain words, such "recovery" or "romance". We can expect that our students may sometimes make erroneous interpretations based on choosing a familiar meaning of a word that does not correspond to the meaning intended by the author. However, we should not expect our students to continue reading and not recognize their mistake in the face of contradictory or inconsistent new information or, if they do recognize such inconsistencies, then either ignore the inconsistency or distort the information in the text to fit with their prior inferences or interpretations. We need to help students develop or transfer the abilities to effectively monitor and evaluate the match between their understanding or interpretation of the text and the text itself, so they can recognize inconsistencies or contradictions between meanings of particular words they have chosen or inferred and information later in the text. Finally, we need to help our readers develop or transfer appropriate strategies to deal with inconsistencies between prior interpretations and later information in the text that they recognize. Instead of discounting inconsistencies or distorting the text to fit erroneous prior interpretations, we can help students develop the strategies of looking for information that confirms prior interpretations or inferences and, when encountering contradictory evidence, the strategies of questioning or disconfirming prior interpretations, considering alternative interpretations, looking at the problem from a different perspective, or any other strategy that will help them solve problems caused by contradictions between prior inferences or interpretations and later information in the text. Phillips (1987) and Kang (1991) discuss some of these strategies in more detail.

One way to help students develop these monitoring skills and the skill of looking more closely at the text for information that confirms or disconfirms inference is a reading activity called the Directed Reading Thinking Activity (DRTA). This is a teacher-directed group activity (or an individual activity as well) that has students, at selected points in the text, stop and make hypotheses and predictions about what they think is happening at that point and what they think will happen next. The students are required to support and confirm their hypotheses and predictions with information from the text (or disconfirm them, if they later find contradictory evidence in the text). Descriptions of the activity and how to use it with students can be found

in numerous texts on teaching reading, such as Tierney, Readence, and Dishner (1990) or Walker (1988).

As well, the ability to utilize the skill of inferring meanings of words from the context is important when encountering familiar words as well as unfamiliar words. We can help our students by helping them develop strategies to use in inferring meanings from the context. Such instruction should consist of more than just providing students with short explanations and examples of a few context clues. A more thorough program for helping students develop skills in using the context to infer meanings can be found in Sternberg (1987). He advocates teaching people not only the cues that can be commonly (or rarely) found in text, but also the processes and moderating variables involved in learning words from context. Three processes of learning vocabulary from context that he identifies are:

1. Selective encoding - separating relevant from irrelevant information in order to formulate a definition
2. Selective combination - combining relevant cues into a definition
3. Selective comparison - relating new information about a word to old information stored in memory

Along with these processes, he identifies eight context cues upon which these processes can be applied: temporal, spatial, value, stative descriptive, functional descriptive, causal/enablement, class membership, and equivalence cues. The moderating variables that determine the ease or difficulty of applying the processes to the cues are:

1. Number of occurrences of the unknown word.
2. Variability of contexts in which multiple occurrences of the unknown word appear
3. Importance of the unknown word to understanding the context in which it is embedded
4. Helpfulness of surrounding context in understanding the meaning of the unknown word
5. Density of unknown words
6. Usefulness of previously known information in cue utilization (For more detailed information, see Sternberg, 1987: 91-94)

This program provides students with a more accurate and comprehensive set of skills and knowledge about how, and to what extent, they can use the context to get a better sense of the intended meaning of the word in a particular context.

In short, we need to make our students of a second or foreign language more aware of the ubiquitous nature of polysemy in English or other foreign languages. Since foreign language readers encounter problems with polysemy in reading, we need to help them learn how to recognize when such problems exist as well as what to do to help resolve the problems caused when they experience the "treachery of familiar words" that Bensoussan (1986) spoke of.

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INTERACTIVE PEDAGOGY IN A LITERATURE BASED CLASSROOM

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Abstract

Preserving a literary-based curriculum, creating a sensitivity to the literature, and encouraging communicative skills relative to the literature are significant goals in foreign language study. Therefore, a program involving strategic interaction and cooperative learning techniques applied to the study of literature fosters communication and comprehension within a cultural context.

Three categories of relative, effective, and practical tools for literary based discourse will be discussed in the paper: 1) scenarios and situations, 2) serious sillinesses, and 3) six sombreros. The implementation and expansion of some already practiced devices offers new possibilities within the literary framework.

What we know about how we learn "argues for interactive rather than language based reading" (Swaffar, Arens, and Byrnes 1991: 53). Certainly, a program involving strategic interaction and cooperative learning techniques applied to a literary-based classroom fosters both communicative and comprehension skills within a cultural context. Three categories of relative, effective, and practical tools for literary based discourse will be discussed in this paper: 1) scenarios and situations, 2) serious sillinesses, 3) and six sombreros. It is understood that same segments of the examples presented are not necessarily innovative. It is the implementation and expansion of the same within a literary framework that offers new possibilities.

Students should be aware of the association between "culturally conditioned images" (Seely 1984: 71) and the vocabulary or phrasing in the target language. This association includes the relationship to the entire scope of the language's literature. Context is essential; background knowledge exists within a socio-psychological framework. Within this framework, the language learner already has a great deal of common sense about the world (Nattinger 1984: 393). It is obvious that discussion of the literature in any given L1 must evoke the background of the reader. Discussion of the literature in L2, however, requires that the student practice socio-linguistic patterns in addition to showing any literature knowledge. Although the language necessary for analytical thinking "involves a sophisticated use of grammar and vocabulary as well as organizational and logical thinking skills" (Schultz 1991: 979), the schism between intermediate and advanced levels of L2 (where often the "study" of literature suddenly appears) is not only a problem of sophistication with grammar, vocabulary and analysis, but also with experience: linguistic and lived. Thus it is important to create at least a minimal experience for the literature in L2 so that the student's facility with both language and cultural sensitivity will be augmented. As Swaffer, Arens, and Burns (1991: 73) suggest.

> "Without sensitivity to the text's cultural preconditions, even advanced students tend to register facts, but fail to register the textual inferences ..." (Swaffar, Arens, Byrnes 73).

An interactive pedagogy augments the students' broader comprehension through unique participation.

Scenarios and Situations

The scenario, is a combination of juxtaposed role playing, undetermined resolution, and significant debriefing (Di Pietro 1983). It is an interesting, and active tool for the production of realistic discourse from a literary base. From a portion of the targeted literature, instructors choose an idea or theme to be treated in the scenario. They then write the roles relative to a problem within the theme. There are usually two roles per scenario, but some effective scenarios can be treated with three or even four roles. If the class is large, the instructor creates several scenarios concerning the same theme. In writing the roles, the instructors provide information exclusive to that role.

For the scenario, the class is divided into as many groups as there are roles; if there are two scenarios, each with two roles, there will be four groups. The students receive their group's role in written form. Together they assess the requirements of the role; they discuss how they will develop this specific role, what vocabulary they will need, and what strategy they will execute.

After a time specified for preparation of the role, one student is selected from each group to play out the role. The role player may be chosen by an instructor or by the group members. If the same group is maintained for several weeks' duration and multiple scenarios are worked, it is likely that the students, legitimately imposing fairness, will themselves rotate the role player so that all students have an opportunity to perform.

During the performance, the remainder of each group (the non-performing members) coaches the acting team member concerning the strategy to use as additional information is revealed through the opposite role. The coaches offer suggestions to the performer as required. If the performers are truly perplexed, they may signal a *time out* in order to consult privately with fellow group members. The *time out* is limited to a minute so as not to severely interrupt the problem solving process now set in motion. In the best interest of the involvement of all students the number of the *time outs* is also limited.

If the coaching group is small enough and capable of articulate stage whispers, they may vocalize their suggestions (in the target language) directly to the performer without a *time out*. Often, the coaching group may be more sagacious and linguistically adept than the performer as the spectators observe the trend of the interaction. Therefore, they may call out suggestions for the discourse in a rather excited fashion. Such enthusiasm for the task has a positive, effect this facilitates the performance, and assures linguistic processing for the non-performing students.

The scenario is played out until some type of resolution occurs, e.g., the settlement of the problem evoked by the differences of agenda generated from the roles. Numerous factors may influence the resolution including: 1) the language skills of the of the performer, and the coaching abilities of the entire group; 2) the personality and persistence of the performers. A capable student who is not interested in arguing a point may defer to a less linguistically talented student whose persistence will force the confrontation and thus the discourse. In one form or another, resolution will occur as long as time is sufficient to permit its occurrence. The time required to conclude with resolution is not absolutely predictable.

Using François de Chateaubriand's *René* as literary reference point, we shall describe specific appropriate scenarios. One of the themes of this "mal du siecle" novel is that of suicide. The following could be used to treat this theme in the target language.

Rôle A:

Vous venez de recevoir un coup de téléphone de l'hôpital où se trouve votre fille parce qu'elle a essayé de se suicider. Vous lui parlez. Elle insiste que vous ne disiez rien de cette situation. Vous revenez chez vous pour y réfélechir.

Rôle B:

Vous avez une amie qui semble être déçue...triste. Elle ne veut plus sortir avec ses amis. Elle se retire. Vous téléphonez à sa mére pour lui demander si elle avait constaté ces changements.

When the preparation has finished, the two group come together; the chosen role players are set to commence. The instructor simply introduces the forthcoming drama as a phone conversation. At the direction of the instructor, the friend initiates the call.

The struggle occurs because the friend (Rôle B) is attempting to discover more information about the daughter; the mother (Rôle A), respecting her daughter's request, will respond to the friend's inquiries while still preserving her daughter's privacy. However, another dimension will affect the progression of the discourse: that of emotion. The mother is forced to maintain a calm demeanor as the questions and concerns are posed. The mother may have a greater need to share her feelings as well. It is clear that the performers will need to use various tenses and sentence types in order to carry out the scenario. Also significant will be the numerous strategies and coping mechanisms required to reach a resolution.

There is not a tangible goal for the conclusion of this scenario. One is neither buying nor selling. It is informational acquisition which is the asset in dealing with the emotional upheaval of the three lives. The mother may or may not release the ultimate information, but it is obvious that emotions will have to be considered.

The preparation and role playing for this scenario will probably require the hour duration of a given class period. Debriefing will require at least two class periods or more (if the scenario has been especially successful in provoking discussion). The syntactical and morphological debriefing will occupy minimal time and is easily integrated at this level into the content discussion. The content discussion regarding the theme of suicide now has a relevant foundation as both role players and team members can make a better association with the involvement in suicide. Who becomes involved in the problem? Were you as participants/observers angry or sad? Should the daughter's wishes have been respected? Was the daughter's request a fair one?

Students might also be asked to imagine that they were Amélie (René's sister) listening to René's serious ramblings about the frustrations and boredom of his life. They may be asked to parallel the vocabulary used in their scenario to that of the actual text. From these discussion questions, motivated by the scenario, the instructor now makes the transition to the text. Because the students have now had a simulated contact with the theme, there is actually a greater basis for meaningful discussion.

Another event in the novel is Amélie's entrance into a religious order. René is Amélie's only living relative; they are dear friends, and René is devastated by the prospect of Amélie's departure. The following scenario, albeit on a lighter note, might serve as an introduction to the reading containing René's response to this announcement.

> Rôle A:
>
> Vous sortez avec Pierre depuis deux ans. Vous l'aimez beaucoup; il avait indiqué qu'il voulait se marier avec vous. Ce soir vous allez dîner ensemble...à un bon restaurant. Vous vous attendez bience soir parcè que peut être va-t-il parler du mariage.
>
> Rôle B:
>
> Vous sortez avec Marie depuis deux ans. Elle est très sympa, intelligente, élégante, etc. Vous l'aimez beaucoup, mais depuis plusieurs mois vous réfléchissez á devenir prêtre. En effet, vous avez pris la décision de faire vos études au séminaire. Marie va dîner avec vous ce soir à son restaurant préféré; vous devez lui parler de vos intentions.

Once again, the outcome of this scenario is not clearly predictable. The emotions of hurt and anger should surface. A strong Rôle A might be able to persuade Rôle B to change his plans. A spiritual dimension may be encouraged. Both structure and vocabulary will vary depending upon the route the role players assume.

The *situation*, a long-standing pedagogical device in L2 elementary levels (the café scene, family dinners, introductions, etc.) is rooted in the idea of a play. There is a beginning, dénouement, and predetermined conclusion. Unlike the scenario, all the performers know what to say and when to say it. The situation does not evoke the normality of expression that the scenario fosters. However, given parameters that are not too rigid, the *situation* can also provoke sensitivity, establish a mood, and give the student a contextual growth experience within the L2. The *situation* need not resemble the "dialogue" that has been the main stay of numerous beginning and intermediate texts. Students create and write their own situations based on a very broad directive. The written creation is skeletal so that students do not depend entirely on a written script, which often reduces fluency during the performance, produces little discourse and alienates the audience due to the lack of eye contact with the performers.

For the situation, students are grouped into small units and given, written or orally, the schema for a particular drama. The same schema may be used for all the groups; creative results are usually as varied as the number of groups. However, a variety of similar "themed situations" may also be assigned. In group, the students construct the plot and its resolution. Strong elements of drama are encouraged as students take charge of both the situation and the language necessary to work the situation. Following a time of preparation, predetermined and announced by the instructor, each group presents their mini-play.

Following the presentations, the resolutions of each drama are discussed and compared. Certain vocabulary words that may appear in the targeted literary text are extracted and highlighted. The instructor parallels the applicable situations to the reading assignments which the students subsequently encounter. Comprehension of the text is facilitated as sensitivity has augmented interest and capability.

Situations applicable to René might be:

1. Your big sister, whom you adore, tells your family that she is moving to a city on the West Coast where she has secured a new job. Students in the group will play the role of parents, siblings, and the sister.
2. You decide that you have had enough of city living, and that you are going to move to the country where you anticipate that all will be blissful.

In this second situation, students may do such things as arrange for the moving company, select a house, talk about leaving old friends, and project the joys of "Mother Nature."

In the country they may choose to fine a leaky roof, unfriendly raccoons and a too distant video store. On the contrary, they may decide that fresh air, flowers and bovine creatures are a delight. The outcome will determine whether the transfer to the text is one of contrast or comparison.

Serious Sillinesses

A second very broadly based category of activities to be applied to the study of literature is what is termed "serious silliness." This myriad of activities is frequently based on "ice-breaker" inter-social devices. The possibilities are endless; the variety and number depend upon one's own creativity, commitment to observing daily life and its relation to the lessons of the literary piece.

Serious sillinesses appear to be most successfully implemented ten to fifteen minutes either at the beginning or the conclusion of class. These activities get the student moving about in the cooperative learning mode, reducing inhibitions and thus increasing the use of L2.

Applied to René, the following are explanations of several serious silliness devices:

1. "Whisper down the lane".

   A variation on the table game "gossip", this activity incorporates practice in both listening and speaking skills.

The class is divided into teams of no more than seven persons. Each team forms a line separated a bit from the other lines so that team members are not privy to other team members' whispers. A quotation from the text such as "Inconnu, je me mêlais á la foule: vaste dessert d'hommes" (Chateaubriand 205) is written. One paper is given to each last person in line. This student may have about thirty seconds to read the sentence. It is more effective to have the quotations from portions already read so that students are more apt to recognize the quote. When the time is announced, the last person in each line may whisper the quote (without benefit of paper) to the person in front of him/her. This procedure will continue until the statement reaches the first person, who will then write what he/she has understood on the board or paper. The first team with the correct quote wins. Numerous quotes may be used to review content.

2. "Time in a bottle"

> Bubbles, although a child-related diversion, are an effective device for producing timed discourse concerning the text.

Students sit in a circle; each student has a turn at blowing bubbles from a bottle. Each student speaks for the duration of the bubbleś' existence. Relative to the text, the instructor may assign a sort of "free speak" where the students may speak about anything they remember from the text. This assignment may be used at the beginning of the reading of a larger work. A "continuation" might be required where the first student commences the story of the text and the others follow with correct sequencing. The instructor might also propose various themes from which the student presents certain supportive details, (e.g. *Amélie devient religieuse*, or *la mort d'Amélie*) as their bubbles are in the air.

3. "Statues"

> This is a physical activity which terminates in verbal discourse.

Two students are selected for center stage. Initially, one might choose two students who would feel less sensitive about performing. They are instructed to move about, changing positions, but remaining fairly close to each other (conversation will be produced). Music might serve to gear their movements. After no more than a minute, the students freeze into the final assumed position. They begin a conversation relative to this position and to the content of the literary text. They are thus visually associating the position with the discourse of the text. Amélie may be scolding René for his obsession with the boredom of life; Père Sorel may be extolling the blessings of nature. Following the discussion in the first person, the class may now comment on the statue positions of the two performers, perhaps indicating other possibilities from the text. The discourse has now shifted to the third person. Both content and structure have been actively expanded for the student.

4. "Slices"

> This division of a specific literary passage provides students the opportunity to be engaged in a type of group within a group activity.

A passage of a larger text or a small text in its entirety may be chosen, the text may be cut into as many sections as there will be group divisions within the class. Each group receives a "slice" of the reading not in actual sequence of the text. A certain time is allotted to each group to read and discuss among themselves the content of their particular segment so that they may report orally.

After the allotted time, the groups' attention is drawn to the class as a whole. Each group, called upon at random, presents the significant content of their portion. The class has been instructed to listen intently as they are responsible for the content. At the conclusion of the presentations, the class is requested either together or individually to sequence the presentations. Structurally, the importance of tense, transition words, and tone may be noted.

Six Sombreros

The Six Thinking Hats, Eduard de Bono's color-coded guide for developing critical thinking skills in management, suggests ideas which are especially applicable to a communicative literary-based foreign-language classroom. This is an approach which can be effectively utilized in all levels.

To facilitate the process, the class is divided into five groups. Each group is assigned to treat the portion of the text being read, or a small text in its entirety, according to the appropriate representation of each hat. The assignment may be completed in class or as a homework assignment in which case each group would be responsible for a presentation the following class. Colored hats or colored papers as a type of centerpiece ID for each group visualize the discussion. The colors of the "hats" may be at the discretion of the instructor (de Bono has used white, red, black, yellow, blue, and green).

The "white hat" group is responsible for the facts and details of the reading. They should present any events in chronological order indicating correct sequencing, flashbacks, etc. This group offers no opinions. Theirs is a journalistic approach, and they report first.

The "red hats" students will be concerned with the emotions the feelings offered by the text. They will note the emotional behavior of the characters; they will note their own feelings towards the passage; they will identify what in the text triggered these feelings. Nuances of vocabulary will thus surface as well as the concept of "style" linked with passion or the lack of it in the text.

Those wearing "purple hats" will confirm the negative dimensions in the passage. They will comment on the obvious such as the evil or cunning behavior or the characters; they may note the motivation for such behavior. The idea of fate, natural disaster might surface. This group may also express their own negative feelings concerning the text; they may delineate what they did not like and why. In contrast, the "yellow hats" will be challenged to counterbalance the purple hatters as they reason the author's intent. This group will reflect on any positive feelings evoked from the text.

Green hats, it might seem, have the most interesting task as they are challenged to think creatively about the text. Affirming the actual facts about the passage, they are permitted speculation. They might create alternative conclusions to the story. They might speculate on the various themes of the text; they might consider what would transpire if the story were set in a different locale, at a different time. (René might have found a support group in the suburbs!) Structurally, this discussion will foster the use of conditional tenses and subjunctive moods.

Finally, the blue hat organizes and summarizes the thoughts produced by each of the other groups. This hat cannot be relegated to a group prior to the oral presentations of the other five groups since it will not yet have the information from the other groups. Blue hatters may therefore be all of the class members who have listened to and evaluated the presentations; they may also be designated members from each group who form a blue hat panel. The instructors might even be the blue hat as they draw the thoughts of each group to the necessary focal points. Each student might also become an individual blue hat as instructors assign a written composition or perhaps uses the blue hat position as an individual student test.

Each of the humanistic communicative activities delineated in this presentation heightens the students' interest for the literary text, creates a relationship to the text, and most significantly, provides a solid goal-oriented discourse, simultaneously preserving the study of literature. Also noteworthy is that in addition to their academic and pragmatic value, these activities infuse a great deal of pleasure into the classroom so that students are often surprised when the bell or the watch signals the end of class.

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LANGUAGE TELECOURSES FOR ADULTS - PROS AND CONS

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Abstract

Telecommunicated learning has been available since the 1930s with the use of radio for instruction. Research has been conducted on its effectiveness, but little that focuses on the specifics of language learning. In the past two decades, language telecourses have proliferated and are used widely for adult education. This article reports on the experience with language telecourses at Catonsville Community College, comparing the success of telecourse students (the number who earn a grade of *C* or better) to that of students in regular courses. More studies need to be conducted on the proficiency of telecourse students versus that of regular students.

Introduction

When adult students meet in the college classroom, certain problems arise that can be handled well in a non-traditional setting, the language telecourse. First, no matter how carefully the college diagnoses new adults, they will arrive with a wide range of abilities and background. The instructor will be teaching potential honor students next to students with poor English skills, perhaps even learning disabilities. Moreover, the students themselves will recognize these differences and tend to compare their progress. The well-prepared may become impatient, while the less prepared will berate themselves for their apparent slowness. The individualized tutoring and flexible pacing in telecourses can diminish these two tendencies dramatically.

Secondly, attendance is often difficult for adults. Jobs, families and other obligations interfere with required weekly classes. The spotty attendance tends to undermine class morale, other students' as well as the instructor's. Strict rules don't seem to help, since the outside obligations are often real and cannot be avoided. In telecourses, attendance at class sessions can be optional without affecting the students' performance. Personal tutoring, by phone or in person, can be arranged with a minimum of inconvenience to student or instructor.

A third issue in language courses is the variety of needs of students with different learning styles. Some students require frequent contact with the teacher and the group. Others work more effectively on their own with minimal guidance. Likewise, some students require frequent oral feedback while others need written practice. In well-managed telecourses, teachers have the time and energy to use different approaches with different learners. In addition, some of the newer telecourses bombard the senses with a variety of stimuli. It would be impossible for one teacher to provide the same dazzling array of approaches.

Finally, teachers can emphasize different content areas to meet individual demands. For example, they can emphasize vocabulary for specific jobs or majors without taking class time from other students. Policemen, social workers, health professionals, and teachers can all benefit. Initially, telecourses require a lot of planning and preparation, but after the beginning stages, time is available for individualizing content.

There are some disadvantages to teaching language by telecourse. Extra effort is needed during the preparation of exams, more than in traditional classes. Possibilities for misinterpretation increase with distance. The teacher must allow time for creating examples and proofreading for clarity. A second problem is the relatively high rate of attrition. Telecourse instructors in all disciplines experience a higher dropout rate than in regular courses, despite continued efforts to retain students. Third, not all colleges have the necessary support team and resources. Adequate media staff and services, a testing center with evening and weekend hours, cable hook-up and most of all, administrative support are necessary. Nevertheless, telecourses are worth the investment. They provide some adults with an opportunity they might not otherwise have.

What are Language Telecourses? How and Where are They Used?

Depending on the campus, state or country, the term "language telecourse" can mean a whole range of technological activities which seek to reach students at a distance. It may be as simple as the use of the phone and correspondence or as complex as interactive satellite communication. Some educators communicate with electronic mail via personal computers; others use two-way cable television.

Geographically, these techniques are being tried around the world. The British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) has produced several language telecourses. The government of Germany used television to teach German to a heterogeneous immigrant population. The Central Broadcasting Television University of China has produced an English telecourse for Chinese citizens. TV Ontario has broadcast second language courses, especially French, since the 1970s.

Within the United States, numerous universities and public school systems have been experimenting with language telecourses. In the states of Iowa, Maryland Massachusetts, Minnesota, Mississippi, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Oklahoma, Utah and Washington language telecourses have been broadcast by satellite. North Dakota and Missouri have offered a German by satellite program. The Montgomery County Public School System of Maryland has been using two-way television courses for its advanced placement or honors students in foreign languages. University College of the University of Maryland offers language telecourses. In fact, University College began offering an entire bachelor's program on cable television in 1991. Northern Virginia Community College offers language telecourses and the University of Virginia joins with other universities in the state to provide an array of satellite courses to rural students. Language telecourses have also been used to target special populations in the U. S., such as the survival Spanish course at Miami Dade Community College.

An early study of the effectiveness of a language telecourse was conducted at Iowa State University. The foreign language department with the help of curriculum committees evaluated the first few years of a televised German course, which used the *Guten Tag* series. They developed the course for two reasons: 1) to reach more foreign language students in order to increase enrollment and 2) to equate student proficiency in telecourses with that of on-campus students. They discovered that they had achieved their first objective, but not the second. After five years, between 1979 and 1984, the courses still had good enrollment, but the students did not demonstrate the same proficiency as on-campus students. Consequently, they added an additional semester of the telecourse to meet the college language proficiency requirement. They

also bolstered the support network for off-campus students, with better facilities at extension centers, frequent phoning and occasional class meetings. They were satisfied with these improvements but not with the oral testing procedures. They found their method of testing on the phone too time-consuming. They also found that all students were not equally prepared for oral testing since some were not purchasing the audiotapes. In a summary article in 1984, they concluded that the telecourse is good for reading and writing skills and adequate as revised to meet the language requirement. However, because of its limitations, they felt it should be made available *only* to those students who cannot attend campus classes. Their main recommendation to those who would use telecourses was to devote a great deal of time, i.e., time for preview and selection, for individualized tutoring and for orientation. They feel "one needs an extraordinary amount of time" for these tasks (Johnson and Van Iten 1984: 36).

The Iowa State experience with the language telecourse is similar to that of Catonsville Community College (CCC), though different in two areas. First, oral proficiency does not seem to suffer in the telecourse at CCC. In fact, listening comprehension as well as oral production is generally better in the French telecourse than in regular French classes. The immersion approach in the French telecourse *French in Action* (FIA)[1] does help. I do not notice the same oral skills in the Spanish telecourse. Pronunciation is more difficult for these students, though their listening and speaking skills are on a par with those of traditional Spanish students. It is interesting to note that the author of the German television series did not find lower proficiency in his telecourse students. The Iowa State team attributed this to the fact that "students were guided through the course daily by an instructor" (36). Assessing speaking skills is relatively easy with the student-made audiotapes. They simply mail or deliver the assigned tape, and the instructor can evaluate and correct the tapes within a week.

Secondly, the faculty time commitment need not be so extraordinary. Though the initial time needed is great for selection, preparation and adjustment, later it levels off into a manageable routine. After the first semester or two, the teacher can adjust to the spasmodic schedule during the semester and deal with it efficiently. Weekly guidance of students is possible and is generally sufficient.

A study on language telecourses in general was written by Soudack, a research consultant for TV Ontario. He looked at a number of sources, TV Ontario research reports as well as articles on second language learning and distance education, and described past offerings, made recommendations and posed a number of questions for consideration before development of a telecourse. Though he gave few conclusions about the effectiveness of telecourses and student proficiency, it is worthwhile to look at some of his descriptions and recommendations.

The description of enrollees in telecourses is similar to that at CCC, i.e., adults who need flexible scheduling with a mixed background in languages and a variety of needs. One of the characteristics differs from that of the typical CCC student: "highly educated in the upper reaches of the economic and occupational scales" (Soudack 1990: 4). CCC adults represent a range of educational backgrounds and are from varying occupational/economic levels.

Soudack recommended including grammar in the course because "adult students nearly always demand explicit instruction in grammatical rules" (1990: 6). He also stated that an immersion approach "is not practical for television" because "teaching on television requires at

least some English to orient the student" (1990: 7). Grammar can be included in the printed materials of the course to complement content of the videos. Experience with FIA demonstrates that immersion can be successful with adults. Though the videos use immersion, the FIA workbooks explain grammar in English as well as in French. Instructors can also provide grammar explanations in English as needed.

Soudack also looked at phone contact and concluded that it is not essential. Those that had a phone tutor available tended not to call, and the group without a tutor did not seem to miss the opportunity. Instructors usually find out early in the semester that some students count on phone calls while others prefer to work on their own. However, those that prefer phone calls claim they really help. In a few cases, the phone provides the only personal contact with a teacher.

Soudack believes there are two major problems with language telecourses: 1) the lack of oral feedback and practice in producing the language and 2) the attrition rate. He cites one study which shows as high as 50% drop-off (1990: 15). Phone conversations and student-produced audiotapes can solve the feedback problem. The group review sessions help as well. The frequent phoning and mailings throughout the semester have helped to minimize drop-off in CCC courses to 20% or less. Soudack believes that support services can reduce the dropout rate by half.

Some studies of distance learning in general are pertinent to language telecourses. Ohler lists a number of reasons in favor of general telecourses including: to overcome geographic isolation or disabilities which prevent coming onto campus, to resolve a schedule conflict, to escape tracking which may occur subconsciously in the classroom, for remediation, to reduce anxiety which occurs in the classroom, to reduce educational costs and finally to "take advantage of a world of experts and resources that only media can provide" (Ohler 1991: 33). The article is thought-provoking. It suggests that a number of social pressures can occur in the traditional classroom which impede learning. Whether one agrees or not with all of his reasons in support of distance learning, they do give a fresh view by treating distance learning as a new horizon rather than a second best recourse.

Overall, telecourses have several advantages over regular courses. First of all, they provide "educational equity" (Johnstone 1991: 50) "everyone is perceived on a similar basis regardless of physical handicaps, regional or national accents, usual assertiveness in face-to-face discussions, and other characteristics that would tend to put students on unequal footing in the usual classroom setting" (1991: 57). Secondly, extra funds are not needed for teachers or classroom space. Third, and most important, student proficiency after the telecourses, is not weaker than that of students in regular courses. In fact, a teacher of the learning disabled observed that her students were able to pay closer attention to the television than to a live teacher (Johnstone 1991: 56). Another professor claimed his students achieved a higher level of critical thinking in his interactive English television course (1991: 56).

There are no significant conclusions about the effectiveness of telecourses in different content areas. Just because a math telecourse may be successful does not mean a language telecourse will be. More research needs to be conducted on the effectiveness of telecourses so that the appropriate media, instructional strategies and support can be selected in each discipline and so that teachers can be trained adequately.

Overall, the greatest criticisms of language telecourses focus on 1) the lack of face-to-face, live interaction and 2) a related concern, the possible overreliance on technology. Even those most committed to distance learning warn that language teachers should not treat technology as a "quick fix" (Jones 1989) for classroom problems. These are wise warnings to those who would develop language telecourses. Courses without feedback, communication and for the gregarious students, bonding, go against the very nature of language, which is human interaction. Likewise, students with challenging learning problems cannot resolve them completely in a telecourse.

At CCC, the content of the language telecourse is provided in video lessons from various producers. We have used *Zarabanda* from the BBC and are currently using *Conversemos* as beginning Spanish courses. For beginning French, we have always used *French in Action (FIA)* Students watch the videos (one half hour lesson per week) via county cable in their homes, or they watch or, in certain cases, check out the videos in our library media center. The French course includes audiotapes which the students purchase and use at home or in the media center. Class meetings are scheduled on Saturdays to practice communication with a live teacher and to review for the scheduled exams. The students are evaluated on the basis of four written exams and on audiotapes which the students create by recording themselves. They take the exams at their convenience in the college testing center, and they mail or deliver the audiotapes. The chronology in Table 1 gives a history of telecourses at CCC.

Table 1

Language Telecourses at Catonsville Community College (CT, VC) and at Carroll College (WZ)

Spring 1986	-	Spanish 101 CT - *Zarabanda, Beginning Spanish*, 4th edition, by David Curland, University of Oregon (Dubuque: Kendall/Hunt, 1982) to accompany BBC's Spanish language videos
Fall 1986	-	Spanish 101 CT - *Zarabanda*
Spring 1987	-	Spanish 101 CT - *Zarabanda*
Fall 1987	-	French 101 CT, WZ - *French in Action*, 1st edition, by Pierre J. Capretz and Barry Lydgate (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1987)
Spring 1988	-	French 102 CT, WZ - *French in Action* Spanish 101 CT, WZ - *Zarabanda*
Fall 1988	-	French 101 CT, VC, WZ - *French in Action*
Spring 1989	-	French 102 CT, VC, WZ - *French in Action*
Fall 1989	-	French 101 CT, VC, WZ - *French in Action*
Spring 1990	-	French 102 CT, VC, WZ - *French in Action*
Fall 1990	-	French 101 CT, VC, WZ - *French in Action*
Spring 1991	-	French 102 CT, VC, WZ - *French in Action* Spanish 101 CT, VC - *Conversemos, Let's Talk*, 1st edition, by Carlos Z. Gomez and Janet R. Hafner, Palomar Community College of Coast Community College District (Dubuque: Kendall/Hunt Publishing Co., 1988), distributed by Coast Telecourses
Fall 1991	-	French 101 CT, VC, WZ - *French in Action* Spanish 101 CT, VC, WZ - *Conversemos*

Adult Learners at Catonsville

The traditional beginning language class at CCC is filled with diverse students. They are diverse in terms of preparation for a college language course, of ability to attend, of learning style and of expectations from the course. It is difficult, if not impossible in some cases, for instructors to satisfy all of the learning needs in the class. They spend a good deal of the semester revising lesson plans, altering the pace and using class time to talk to individuals about personal needs in the course.

The different levels of preparation are a common phenomenon in post-high school courses.[2] Loughrin-Sacco (1990) investigated the effects of integrating true beginners and false beginners in language classes. He noted that a national survey by Klee and Rogers (1989) showed that on the average 57% of students in beginning language classes had already had one year or more of the language in high school. Some classes had as many as 92% false beginners! Based on two studies at Michigan Technological University, Loughrin-Sacco described the anxiety that the true beginners underwent in class, their hesitation to speak and their slow and difficult progress. The false beginners, on the other hand, often enrolled in the course for an "easy A" (1990: 91). They tended to achieve this objective, raise their Q.P.A. and boast about it. This led to what Loughrin-Sacco called "the intimidation factor" (1990: 94), a painful obstacle for true beginners.

At CCC, such experiences are particularly difficult for adults. One way to avoid the problem is to encourage false beginners to earn credit by exam. However, this incentive is frequently not enough or, in some cases, inappropriate for false beginners and they continue to enroll in elementary courses.

Additionally, in the ideal class, where all of the students have basic skills for college courses, they inevitably respond to the material at vastly different levels. During oral communication, when performance is especially obvious, some respond quickly and easily; others have difficulty just repeating. This may have little to do with academic background or with intelligence. In an adult classroom, different response levels can hinder learning. The slower students tend to blame themselves and drop the course yet the faster students become bored when the instructor slows down or repeats material.

A second characteristic of the community college students is that it is often difficult for them to attend every class. Absenteeism due to sickness is compounded by problems with transportation, employment and a dependent family. Most community college students pay their own educational expenses, as well as their lodging, transportation and family bills. Excuses for absences are often legitimate. Nevertheless, the absenteeism undermines the morale of those who do attend. They view frequent make-up work as an unfair advantage, and the teacher spends extra class time repeating material.

A third characteristic of adults is their wide range of individual learning styles. Recently, teacher workshops have emphasized the need to teach with methods that appeal to students with varying preferences (Babcock 1991). There has been at least one study of the relationship of personality and success in telecourses (Scanlon 1985). Other attempts have been made to profile the personality types of students who succeed in language courses (Kanigel 1988). All of the research on style is pertinent to the community college classroom, where diversity is so great. Some of the differences are not a result of skill level, but must be attributed to personalities and

learning style. The learning process is more complex when a teacher's personal style conflicts with that of some of her students (Oxford, Ehrman, Lavine 1990).

Fourth, adult students often have differing expectations of a course. The profiles in Tables 2 through 5 illustrate this. While many enroll in French and Spanish courses because of their language background, others list specific reasons for taking the course, involving various career or personal expectations. The reasons in the table are taken almost verbatim from surveys the students fill out at the beginning of the semester.

Table 2
Summary Profile - Students in Regular Classes - Fall 1990

FRENCH 101

	Language Background			Reasons for Taking Course
	French	Other	None	
1)		X*		
2)	X*			
3)	X*			
4)	X*	X		Love languages; review
5)	X*	X		
6)		X*		
7)	X*	X		
8)	X*	X		Love languages; review
9)	X*			Want to be translator
10)			(X)	(Failed French, 9th grade)
11)	X*			
12)	X*			Want to speak French
13)		X*		
14)	X*			
15)	X*			Interested in languages
16)	X*			Review
17)		X*		
18)	X*			
19)	X*	X		
20)	X*			
21)	X*			
22)	X*			
23)	X*			
24)	X*			

* Earned C or better this semester
◯ Less than C this semester

X • Denotes feature

Table 3
Summary Profile - Students in Regular Classes - Fall 1990

SPANISH 101

	Language Background			Reasons for Taking Course
	Spanish	Other	None	
1)		X*		Former nun; already tutors English & Latin; wants to tutor Spanish
2)		X*		13 years old, special admission; interested
3)			(X)	
4)	X*			
5)			X*	
6)	(X)	X		Father from Dom. Rep.
7)	X*	X		Puerto Rican descent
8)	X*			Want to speak to Hispanic friends
9)	X*	X		
10)	X*			
11)		X*		
12)	X*			
13)		X*		Want to speak Spanish
14)		X*		
15)		(X)		
16)		X*		Required for PhD., Hopkins
17)		X*		
18)	X*			Girlfriend from Puerto Rico
19)	X*	X		
20)	X*			
21)	X*			Review
22)		X*		Want to learn correctly
23)		(X)		Enjoyment
24)	X*			To speak Spanish fluently
25)	X*	X		Hispanic friends
26)		X*		
27)	X*	X		Elementary Education major
28)	X*			Intern. bus. major
29)	X*			
30)	X*			
31)	X*			
32)	(X)			
33)	X*			To bec. int. accountant
34)		X*		
35)	X*			
36)	X*			Portuguese roots; to study similar language
37)	X*			
38)	X*			
39)	X*	X		Travel; to bec. interpreter
40)	X*			Like Spanish
41)	X*	X		Portuguese father
42)			(X)	Hosted exchange student

* Earned C or better this semester
(O) Less than C this semester

X Denotes Feature

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Table 4
Summary Profile - Students in Telecourses - Fall 1990

FRENCH 101

	Language Background			Reasons for Taking Course
	French	Other	None	
1)		Ⓧ		Opera; love languages
2)	X*			Enjoy; work full-time; baby
3)	Ⓧ			Need credit; like French
4)		Ⓧ		Senior citizen; travel; credit
5)	X*			Requirement
6)	X*			Enjoy; help son with homework
7)		X*		Soc. Stud. teacher; PhD. History; enjoy
8)	X*			Cajun roots
9)	X*	X		Review; enjoy
10)		X*		Naval reserves, full-time job & family; grad. req.; interest
11)	X*	X		Graduation requirement
12)			X*	Daughter took it; interest
13)	Ⓧ			Love languages; to speak French
14)	X*			Full-time job; for credit; to become fluent
15)	X*	X		Full-time job; hosts exchange students
16)	X*			Req. for major; schedule; likes individual in TV course
17)	X*	X		From Africa; likes lang.
18)	X*			Towson St. req.; travel
19)	X*	X		Schedule (job); repeat high school French; car accident (can't attend reg. classes); enjoy
20)	X*	X		Full-time businessman; for degree, travel, fluency

* Earned C or better this semester
◯ Less than C this semester

X Denotes feature

Table 5
Summary Profile - Students in Telecourses - Spring 1991

SPANISH 101

	Language Background			Reasons for Taking Course
	Spanish	Other	None	
1)			X*	Graduation requirement; review; 7 mo. pregnant; busy with Cub Scouts
2)	X*			Review
3)	X*			To become fluent
4)	X*			Transfer requirement
5)	(X) (Became ill during sem.)			Enjoyment; grad. req.
6)			X*	Enjoyment
7)	X*			Review before 102; grad. req., full-time police officer
8)		X*		Works full-time; to speak Spanish to friends
9)			X*	Interest
10)		X*		Enjoyment
11)	X*	X		B.A. req., never understood well before
12)	X*			Works full-time; travel
13)		(X)		Works full-time Holiday Inn; hospitality management major
14)		X*		English teacher (used to teach French); enjoyment; for teaching other courses cancelled; need for full-time schedule; enjoyment
15)	X*(C)			
16)	X*			Full-time airline stewardess; for passengers interest; needed one more course
17)		X*		
18)		X*		Full-time social worker; interest
19)	X*			Fiance from Mexico; will be married in Mexico
20)	(X)	X		Interest
21)	X*			full-time job
22)			X*	Moving to Spain
23)	X*			Need elective; interest
24)	X*	X		Full-time police officer; grad. req.
25)		X*		Requirement; parental pressure
26)	X*			International business Major

* Earned C or better this semester
(C) Less than C this semester

X Denotes feature

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The students list requirements (for A. A. degree or transfer), careers, travel, friends, family, or review as their reasons. Those that have studied languages before mention their "love of languages" and their desire "to speak fluently." The telecourse students mention the same array of reasons as the traditional students, but they tend to add information about personal schedule problems and pressing career or family obligations.

Language Telecourses - Pros

The problems that arise in classes of students with mixed skill levels can be handled humanely and effectively in telecourses. Educators have noted that telecourses are good for mixed levels. Demaray noted that the telecourse, *French in Action (FIA)* "is a marvelous program for students of all and many, varying language abilities, the talented and the less talented" (Hodgson 1991: 7). Anglin found that FIA can be used to train teachers of different levels: "The people whose French was much better never got bored with it, and they learned to use it in their classrooms, and the people who were very unsure about their French were able to learn more of the language. The teachers were accomplishing different goals with the same materials" (Hodgson 1991: 2). Ohler suggested that distance learning may be a good way for a student "to escape tracking," whether conscious or unconscious, on the part of the teacher (1991: 29). The human biases that can naturally occur in regular classes of mixed levels do not develop as easily in the objective environment of distance learning.

In telecourses, true beginners do not experience the same anxiety because they do not have to perform in front of their peers. Initially, they use the video and audio tapes on their own, privately if desired. They can also record the videos and watch them over and over. Then they are encouraged to call their instructor with any questions and to set up phone/office tutoring. In these sessions, the instructor can repeat, reassure and slow down as much as necessary without taking time from the other students. By the time the group meets for a review session, the beginners have had the most contact with the instructor and can perform with more confidence.

One may well ask how the instructor can spare the time necessary for so many individual phone and office visits. This is generally not a problem. Researchers have noted that in telecourses "significant proportions (often the majority) of the audiences were not true beginners" (Soudack 1990: 4). This is true at CCC. Therefore there is proportionally more time to devote to the true beginners than in a regular course where there are (both nationally and at CCC) not quite as many false beginners.

Another question may be: Is this good for the false beginners? After all, they are paying students as well and deserve a good educational experience as long as they are not inhibiting the others. At CCC, the answer is an emphatic yes. The false beginners learn to use their resources and to work independently whenever they can. If they falter, they are welcome to use the instructor to help them review. The difference is that they don't have to slow down when they don't need to. They can work at their own pace and concentrate solely on their own weak spots. When these students call, they tend to ask precise questions. Some of these students can achieve an even higher level in the telecourse than in regular courses (see Lambert 1991: 7).

The second problem of adult learners, attendance, can also be handled more effectively with telecourses. The videos, phone and correspondence can replace campus meetings, if necessary.

For example, adults who work overtime or are undergoing medical treatment can succeed in the course as long as they can take the four exams and mail in audiotapes. Though face-to-face contact with the instructor is encouraged, it is sometimes impossible. Nevertheless, all students can still receive tutoring.

In addition, the morale of the rest of the class is not affected by attendance. Nor is student lateness, a perennial source of irritation to teachers and to fellow students, a problem in telecourses. Finally, students who "shop" for courses the first week of classes (despite our advisement efforts) will not disrupt the progress of the class in a telecourse.

Administrators at colleges share another concern, cost. It is difficult to fund language offerings when the enrollment figures are not strong. Lambert notes, as many of us do, that the demand for language courses *is* strong if we can just make them more accessible to the general public (Lambert 1991: 3). Attracting adults into the individualized, off-campus telecourse may be a good method of bringing them eventually on the campus. At Lakewood Community College, administrators have noted that adult learners tend to prefer off-campus settings as an entry point into college courses (Pike and Oelschlager 1991: 1).

Another feature of telecourses is that students on several campuses can be taught by one instructor. The cost of teacher salary is reduced as well as that of classroom space, utilities, services and supplies. Campus parking expenses are also reduced.

Students whose learning styles conflict with that of the teacher or the traditional textbook have more freedom in the telecourse. Telecourses are in a sense team-taught. The teachers on the video and the local, live teacher work together. If the local teacher is not a native speaker, a telecourse package can be selected that uses one or more native speakers in the video presentations. If the local teacher prefers one approach to the material, such as grammar-translation, the multimedia package of the telecourse will offer the student an array of approaches (audio, visual, verbal, written, immersion, etc.), all of which present and reinforce the same material. Some students in my courses prefer to watch the videos over and over; others play the audio whenever possible (in the car, the kitchen, the office). Likewise, some students concentrate on the written exercises, others on the English explanations. Further, some students call and visit frequently, others view the teacher as a "mother hen" and enjoy their independence. Despite vast differences in personality and learning style, all motivated students can succeed, i.e., pass the written exams and perform reasonably well orally (on the phone, at review sessions and on their tapes).

As for the traditional textbook, experts agree that we need to start routinely using multimedia packages for language courses. Rivers urges that every possible medium and modality be used to aid learning. Schulz makes the same recommendation, that we supplement the traditional textbook with every possible medium in foreign language courses. In small departments with limited staff and funding, the language telecourse is a good start in this direction.

Another concern, both abroad and in the U.S., has been the cultural authenticity of materials (see Kelling and Niedzielski 1987). Both Lambert (1991) and Schulz (1990) agree that the materials used in distance learning are often more culturally accurate than the single textbook. Subtle communication through gestures, facial expressions, or postures can be conveyed through

video. Changing settings such as furnishings, fashion and street scenes can be shown as well. Though stereotyping can occur in videos, the latest productions emphasize the variety and dynamism of living cultures.

Finally, it is a little easier for the instructor to satisfy students' expectations in a telecourse. Students with particular professional needs can borrow vocabulary lists, readers and specialized books (for business, health or law enforcement professions). The teacher can also include special phrases at the end of phone conversations without taking time from the other students.

For students who express the broad goal "to speak fluently," there have been some interesting results in the immersion course, FIA. Even though the students attend class less, they are still able to respond as well as traditional students. They are also able to record short paragraphs with good pronunciation and sentence structure for their audiotape assignments. I believe that this is the result of less peer pressure and more individualized attention as well as the immersion approach of FIA.

Language Telecourses - Cons

Language telecourses are not perfect, and I do not wish to promote them as the panacea for the ills of the language classroom. First of all, more teacher time is required initially than for the average language course. The teachers may need to devote part of a summer or some vacation time, if they work full-time. Syllabi, hand-outs, and correspondence must contain every detail in case the student cannot reach the teacher with questions. Exams require more attention. Testing strategies and examples that are clear in regular classes may not be clear on telecourse exams. Questions that arise (about format, etc.) cannot be answered during the exam. More time is required for preparation, not only in the beginning, but also during the semester. Busy and slow times are not as predictable. There may be a long waiting period between mailings and exams and then an avalanche of calls and visits. It may also be difficult for teachers to hold review sessions at non-traditional times, on evenings or weekends.

Further, it takes time for teachers to adjust to the non-traditional approaches of telecourses. In the first course, they may need just as much time as the students to adjust to using the video and audiotapes simultaneously with the printed materials. The first time they teach a telecourse, teachers will have to learn how much time should be spent on each and what are the most efficient procedures. The rhythm and sequence of content is also apt to be different. The instructor who is accustomed to teaching present tense conjugations first may be thrown by the telecourse which uses familiar commands first. Before reassuring students, teachers will need to become comfortable with the materials themselves. Watts noted that "it takes one semester to fully acclimate yourself to its novelty" (1990: 35).

A second problem is that attrition is higher in telecourses than in regular courses. This is a big drawback at community colleges, where attrition in regular courses is already a major concern.

Finally, dealing with students with borderline language skills in their first language is a bit more difficult in telecourses. Though students send written profiles at the beginning of the course, they often arrive late or are hard to diagnose before the course refund period is over. Sometimes

a student who can't read or write well escapes the instructor's attention until it is too late. As the counselors and instructors improve advisement procedures, these students may be diagnosed sooner so they can enroll in the proper basic skills course before taking a language. The only advantage with the telecourse is that these students do not hold up the others, nor are they subject to undue embarrassment in front of a regular class.

Pros and Cons in Language Telecourses - Are They Successful?

At CCC, the retention or success rate (based on a grade of D or better in all telecourses) has improved since 1985 (from 57% to 62% in 1991), but it is still lower than the rate in regular courses (Sneed 1991). In language telecourses, the success rate (based on a grade *C* or better) is higher and comparable to the relatively good retention in regular language courses. Table 6 indicates the number of students out of the class total who earned less than *C* versus those who earned a higher grade. These numbers are then listed as percentages.

Table 6
Attrition Versus Success* - Regular Versus Telecourses - 1990 to 1991

	Less than C/Drops	C or Better
Regular Courses		
French 101 A:	1/24 - 4%	23/24 - 96%
Spanish 101 A and B: **	6/42 - 14%	36/42 - 86%
Telecourses		
French 101 CT:	3/7 - 43%	4/7 - 57%
French 101 VC:	1/11 - 9%	10/11 - 91%
French 101 WZ:	0/2 - 0%	2/2 - 100%
French 101 CT, VC, WZ - Combined Total:	4/20 - 20%	16/20 - 80%
Spanish 101 CT:	2/17 - 12%	15/17 - 88%
Spanish 101 VC:	1/9 - 11%	8/9 - 89%
Spanish 101 CT, VC, Combined Total:	3/26 - 12%	23/26 - 88%

* Success defined as a final grade of C or better in the course. (Auditors or students who never took first exam are not included.)

** A and B represent course sections for traditional classes, CT, VC, WZ for telecourses (see Table 1).

The relative success of language courses may be due to the fact that they are smaller than lecture or other college courses. The instructor can therefore give more attention to potential dropouts.

Table 7 gives similar percentages, but it compares the success rate of true versus false beginners in regular and telecourses. The French telecourse appears to be a difficult course for true beginners, though the students in the Spanish telecourse did even better than their counterparts in regular courses. This would suggest that the choice of language and the approach used are large factors in the success of true beginners. True beginners should therefore be advised

carefully about the course they choose in a telecourse. Also, since the French telecourse uses immersion, true beginners should be advised and monitored closely in a course with this approach.

Table 7
Attrition Versus Success* - Regular Versus Telecourses - True Beginners Versus False Beginners

1990 to 1991

No Prior Language		Some French or Spanish	
Less than C	C or Better	Less than C	C or Better
Regular Courses			
French 101 A:			
0/5 - 0%	5/5 - 100%	1/19** - 5%	18/19 - 95%
Spanish 101 A and B:***			
4/17- 24%	13/17 - 76%	2/25 - 8*%	23/25 - 92%
Telecourses			
French 101 CT, VC, WZ:			
2/5 - 40%	3/5 - 60%	2/15 - 13%	13/15 - 87%
Spanish 101 CT, VC:			
1/12 - 8%	11/12 - 92%	2/14 - 14%	12/14 - 86%

* Success defined as a final grade of C or better in the course.
** Even though this student had studied French before, she had failed the earlier course.
*** A and B represent course sections for traditional classes, CT, VC, WZ for telecourses (see Table 1)

Another consideration for the success of telecourses is the network of support services available. The college will need adequate library/media staff to supply and supervise tapes. A telecourse director should be appointed to handle licensing with telecourses producers and to oversee technical services. The director will also need to work out an agreement with the county cable system, so that off-campus students can watch videos at home. A college testing center is essential with flexible hours both evenings and weekends. The mail room will need to be able to deal promptly with large mailings. The registration office should be equipped to take phone/mail-in registration and to provide address labels by computer several times during the semester. Most of all, there should be administrative support for telecourses.[3]

Individual colleges, as well as consortia of colleges, routinely evaluate their language telecourses with student surveys and curriculum committees. However, little research has been done which systematically compares student progress in language telecourses versus that in regular courses. There have been a few college studies, yet the technology used varies so widely that it is hard to draw conclusions about student proficiency. The amount of interaction and the kinds of testing vary greatly as well. If, as Lambert suggested, we face a strong demand for distance learning of languages, then professionals will need to share their successes and failures as much as possible so that high quality standards can be applied.

More research is needed which compares student proficiency to that in regular courses. Lambert indicated (1991: 8)

> Our research needs to be much more carefully targeted. Few studies are concerned with specific aspects of the teaching-learning process, fewer still with the pedagogical aspects of distance education, let alone with respect to foreign language instruction, and almost none with the important question of how can we go beyond where we are now in both distance learning in foreign language teaching and the relationship of distance learning to the rest of foreign language instruction.

He added that "distance education operates in a sort of educational ghetto in foreign language instruction" because of the lack of research (1991: 36).

Conclusion

In my opinion, language telecourses are worth the effort. However, I agree with Lambert that they should continue as a "controlled experiment" (Lambert 1991: 7) until we have more data on specifics. Assuming that students can attain equivalent proficiency in a telecourse, what technology, what procedures, what support services work best? How much interaction is essential? Will a video or a digitized computer voice do or will some students require live interaction? How can testing be made more comprehensive without being too time-consuming for the teacher? Can proficiency be assessed more accurately?

Even after more research and fine tuning, I do not believe that the telecourses should be the *only* courses available at a college. Students should have the option of taking on-campus courses whenever possible. The telecourses are a good alternative for students who need individual attention or prefer independent learning. They are also the best (and only) alternative for students with difficult schedules or for those who cannot get to the campus regularly. Additionally, they can help administrators cut down on campus facility costs. The core of the foreign language program, however, should be based on a curriculum of on-campus courses, where students interact with teachers every day. This is vital not only for the students, but for the teachers, who can teach distant students more effectively when they are aware of students' daily needs.

As long as they are not central to the program, telecourses can be a fine option for adults. They can use the courses to suit their varied needs, to learn a language at their own pace, or to substitute for campus classes that are not convenient.

Endnotes

1. Since its release in 1987, FIA has been highly praised for its innovations and cultural authenticity. For example, teachers claim that they are able to use more spoken French than in other courses. Also, some claim that it helps develop writing skills. Some use it to teach all ages; others use it as a teacher refresher course. Sole full-time faculty find it like team teaching with teachers in France.

2. Another problem at the community college is the lack of skills in English at the entry level. Despite efforts to reach borderline students prior to registration, many still manage to enroll in language courses that need to work on their skills in English. Numerous spelling and punctuation errors are not uncommon, errors that trace back to a lack of writing ability in English or in another first language. Occasionally, there is a student who cannot create a sentence or read the English explanations in the textbook. We have recently instated a basic prerequisite in English (Reading 101), but it has served only to reduce the problem, not eliminate it.

3. At CCC, we are fortunate to have both an Associate Dean who supports our efforts and a Coordinator of Telelearning who manages all telecourses. In addition, we have an Instructional Staff, including Division Heads and deans, that believes that telecourses are a legitimate portion of faculty load. Without this support, the endeavor would not be possible. This assistance leaves language faculty free to preview, to ensure quality courses and to tend to student needs.

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Appendix

Tips for Telecourses

1. Advise students carefully about telecourses. They are not for everyone.
2. Offer them as an alternative to a solid core of on-campus courses.
3. Allow extra preparation time initially, perhaps release time during the semester or during the summer.
4. Try to be flexible with office and class review hours. Use faculty who can work evenings or weekends.
5. Allow extra time for proofreading/revising exams during semester. Make sure they contain clear examples and are based on the assigned exercises.
6. Provide study guides which highlight important material for exams.
7. Allow extra time on days when material must be mailed or phone contacts are necessary.
8. Personalize notes on handouts and exams.
9. Record personal messages as well as corrections on student-produced audiotapes.
10. Try to establish rapport with students during phone calls. Allow extra time to review together or go over workbook exercises.
11. Take a field trip during the semester. It may be a good opportunity for telecourse students to meet campus students. Include friends and family.
12. Mail announcements of pertinent events (club activities, films, museum exhibits) with other materials.

Student Evaluations

The student evaluations I have are for the years 1988 through 1990. The instructor is rated on the following criteria:

1. The instructor clearly explains the course objectives and requirements in the written course materials.
2. The instructor clearly explains grading practices, in the written course materials.
3. The instructor's grading is fair.
4. The instructor's on-campus classes are well planned and organized.
5. The instructor is actively involved in helping me succeed in my telecourse.
6. The instructor is open to questions and differing opinion.
7. The instructor's tests and assignments are graded and returned in a reasonable period of time.
8. The textbooks and handouts are helpful for learning.
9. The instructor's assignments are reasonable and worthwhile.
10. The instructor makes helpful comments on assignments, papers, and examinations.
11. The instructor is prompt in returning phone calls.
12. The instructor is available for questions and discussion.
13. The instructor cares about the student's progress.
14. The instructor seems to know the subject matter.'

In one of the first telecourses in the fall of 1988, there were high marks in all areas, except #1. In subsequent semesters, there were high marks in all categories, until the spring of 1990, when there was a low mark in #8. Unfortunately, these evaluations are not statistically conclusive, because some students did not fill out the evaluations and the classes were small during those semesters. (Though enrollment is up now, we are still working on efficient ways to collect all the student evaluations.) Nevertheless, they were useful. The weak areas have been improve: orientation, syllabus and handouts.

Catonsville also uses an open-ended form for student evaluation in which students can write any comments they wish, anonymously. The responses referred to here are from 1989 and 1990. They are all evaluating the first semester of the *French in Action* course. Comments in favor of the course praise the instructor, the individual attention from the instructor, the flexible scheduling, the convenience of home viewing, the FIA videos, the live classes, the instructor's extra activities (concerning a field trip and holiday celebrations in France) and the exams. Comments criticizing the course noted poor quality county cable broadcasts (in another county which had a newer cable system), poor quality audiotapes (probably due to errors in copying), the speed of the audiotape drills (too fast!), the lack of explanation in English on the audiotapes, the difficulty for true beginners and the relative lack of interaction with fellow students. The most frequently favored component was the instructor; the most frequently criticized was the FIA audiotapes. These results would lend credence to the conclusion of researchers that personal contact is one of the most important elements in the telecourse.

LES SANTONS DE PROVENCE: INSPIRATION FOR AN INTERDISCIPLINARY PROJECT

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Abstract

Realia and interdisciplinary approaches help foreign language teachers to provide an active teaching-learning situation for their students and to bring students into direct contact with cultural features of the language which they are studying.

This paper reports an interdisciplinary project conjoining French and art. Under the direction of both the French teacher and the art teacher, students at the Illinois Mathematics and Science Academy, Aurora, Illinois, studied the historical, geographical, and cultural features of Provence, and then made their own *santons* of red clay.

Alternatives to working with clay and ideas for sharing the students' experience are presented. Suggestions are offered for adapting the interdisciplinary project to students of various ages. Teachers of other languages may wish to use the suggestions in their own classrooms.

Over the past four decades, there has been a movement in the foreign language profession to include realia in the foreign language classroom. Researchers, foreign language educators, and curriculum writers have made a strong case for the use of realia in the instructional process (Celce-Murcia 1979; Hirsch 1954; Méras 1954; Brooks 1960). Méras (1954:270) defines realia as visual aids such as objects, pictures, slides, records, tapes or motion pictures that are supplemental to textbooks.

In its summary report (Silber 1959:12), Working Committee II of the 1959 Northeast Conference on "The Language Learner" advises publishers to recognize the new trends in modern language study and to encourage textbook authors who introduce techniques for the use of visual-aids.

Under the impact of the National Defense Education Act, the dialogue-centered materials of the audiolingual approach disseminated rapidly during the sixties. To be successful, teachers were to teach the foreign language, not facts about the language. Kelly (1963: 433) emphasized that the use of English was to be held to a minimum, and direct comparison with the mother tongue strictly avoided. By keeping the new language dominant throughout the class hour, the phenomenon of interference could be minimized. The use of audio-visual aids or realia, with their potential for multi-sensory impressions (Hirsch 1954: 32), became indispensable to teachers in their efforts to get across the meaning of new material without resorting to the use of English. Real objects eliminate the need for translation, writes Rosenbusch (1985: 3). Lucietto and Milanesi (1964: 27), in their *Curriculum Guide for French, Grades 7-12*, recommend that the meaning of new dialogue lines be established through a number of techniques, such as gestures, paraphrase, intonation, and the use of visual props.

The incorporation of realia into a lesson has been seen as having infinite value in providing an active teaching-learning situation. Rivers (1983: 127) holds that students learn through seeing, hearing, touching, manipulating, making an argument for the use of visual presentations (flash cards, drawings, films); things the students can hold, open, shut or pass to each other. According to Hirsch (1954: 54), visual aids bring forth greater interest in the classroom and working with them makes for more vivid impressions of the material studied. In discussing the value of using graphics or "key visuals," Early (1991: 32), reporting on an English as a second language project, comments that key visuals provide students with the opportunity both to learn language and, simultaneously, learn through language. Berwald (1987: 1) comments that:

> *realia which consist of a minimum amount of language make it possible for even students considered to be slow language learners to be able to understand with a feeling of accomplishment.*

In addition, Walz (1986: 961) posits that by the use of props, illustrations, and realia (bringing materials to class to make the vague into the concrete), teachers may increase the number of student responses in learning activities.

One of the key advantages to using realia is the establishment of a direct link to culture. These objects, proposes Berwald (1987:2), are not only a series of artifacts that describe the customs and traditions of another culture, but they are also a set of teaching aids that facilitate the simulation of experience in the target culture.

The literature abounds with descriptions of effective ways which creative language teachers have discovered to bring realia to their classrooms. Nuessel (1982: 330), for example, uses foreign currencies to teach the vocabulary of colors, metals, shapes, animals, flowers, heraldry, historical personages, culture, civilization, history, and the concept of legend. As meaningful, appealing, and durable teaching instruments in the foreign language classroom, coins and paper notes are difficult to surpass for their richness in classroom potential.

Other foreign language teachers have used postage stamps as nontraditional realia in their classrooms. Stamps may be a richer, more varied resource since they are issued with far greater frequency than currency. Wood (1979:105) presents the postage stamp as a cultural artifact that may be easily photographed and enlarged to facilitate its use and discussion in class. Besides being conveniently handled, the stamp is a symbol of linguistic identity (Wood 1979:106), useful in teaching about the French-speaking areas outside of France.

Still other teachers enrich the foreign language classroom through interdisciplinary approaches which conjoin the foreign language with another discipline, thus revealing the differences between native and target cultures. As early as the sixties, Lucietto and Milanesi (1964:5) suggested to teachers that they correlate foreign language topics with those of other curriculum areas:

> Important cultural values may be found in areas of learning related to that of foreign language. Such areas of learning are history, science, music, art, geography, and literature. Exploration of these related fields will make the student aware of the depth and complexity of the culture and civilization of the country whose language he is studying.

Enterprising teachers search out other departments for faculty who have interests in common with the language department.[1] They jointly develop interesting content for a unit, or even a course, addressing how certain aspects of life are expressed in another culture. According to Rivers (1983:7,77-78), our students want to be able to understand and be understood and to be able to operate in another culture without offensiveness. The very variety of their needs, however, requires us to make broad interdisciplinary contacts and to broaden our horizons to the interpenetration of language in many areas. Rivers (1983:28) proposes reducing the bondage of students to the familiar and the local. She encourages foreign language teachers to cooperate with teachers of the social studies and other subject areas to develop in their students

> *the flexibility, resulting from informed understanding, that will be needed for an open-minded and culturally detached collaboration with other nations in the solution of problems of planetary concern.*

One interdisciplinary effort, reported by Naughton (1978), initially involved the music and French teachers at the Collège Jean Moulin, outside of Paris, and eventually extended to the drawing and the natural science teachers. The students wrote poems about birds and put them to music. Their enthusiasm continued throughout the year, as they visited a museum exhibit on musical instruments, and expanded their interest to researching musical instruments, drawing and describing in writing the instrument of their preference. According to Naughton (1978:261), the student creations resulting from the experiment were delightful because of their spontaneity, humor, and artistic value.

A unit on the *santons* of Provence presented itself as an opportunity rich in cultural and creative potential for students. It offered students the opportunity to work with teachers from another discipline, to use authentic materials, i.e. original *santons* from the towns in Provence, and to learn about an area of France sometimes neglected in textbooks. Creating *santons* would also give the students the opportunity to draw on their own imagination, personality, and background in creating the material on which part of the class would be based.

In preparation for this project, a number of textbooks of different levels were surveyed.[2] The purpose of the survey was to gain insight into what extent the textbooks might contain relevant information concerning Provence and the traditions of this region of France, specifically the *santon* tradition. The texts were analyzed from the perspective of (1) whether or not Provence is presented, (2) what activities are used to promote an understanding of the region, and (3) the extent to which the *santons* might be mentioned.

Ten textbooks for the French L2 classroom were chosen at random. These textbooks represent introductory and intermediate levels for middle school, high school, and college classes. Textbooks are shown in Table I.

Table I

Textbook references to Provence

Text	Significance in terms of depth and amount of material
CC	X
D-M	X
FF	O
LFA	X
LFV	X
NM	X
ONY	X
PF	O
QN	XX
TRI	XX

Key: CC=C'EST ÇA!; D-M=DIS-MOI!; FF=French for Fluency; LFA=Le français actif I. Approches; LFV=Français vivant 3; NM=Notre monde; ONY=On y va; PF=Perspectives françaises 1; QN=Quoi de neuf?; TRI=Tricolore Stage 3.

The X denotes references to cities or literary or cultural features, while XX denotes a significant treatment of Provence with specific reference to the santons. The O denotes absence of any mention.

The majority of textbooks surveyed provide the teacher with an entrée to a more elaborate treatment of Provence. Working with the help of both the French teacher and the art teacher, students receive an introduction to Provence, its landscape, its historical, cultural, and artistic features, and its products. As preparation for making their own *santons* of red clay, students learn about the origins of the crèche and the *santon* tradition, and how that tradition continues in Provence today (de Sales 1986:16; Guieu 1990:Ross 1991:58-63).

THE ORIGINS OF THE CRÈCHE AND THE *SANTON* TRADITION

Eight hundred years ago, Christmas was not celebrated as it is now. There were no carols, no crèche, and no gifts. It was Francis of Assisi (Guieu 1989; Foley 1959; Cole 1989; Luckhardt 1983), whose mother was from Provence, who staged the first crèche as a memorial to the nativity. Perhaps inspired by his mother's recounting of her Provençal memories of childhood, Brother Francis, in 1223, in Greccio, Italy, created a living tableau (Foley 1959:67) of villagers, a few animals, and a manger. He invited everyone to come and observe the Christmas story. The tender scene in the flickering torchlight so moved the onlookers that the custom spread from Assisi's native Italy, and in time, all over the world.

In Provence, Christmas traditions have always been very strong (Guieu 1989:3) and nativity scenes were among the earliest of them. During the 17th and 18th centuries, the story of the nativity was presented in live performances or pastorales, in puppet shows telling of the travels of the shepherds to the manger, and in figurine displays or crèches. Italian peddlers first brought the small, brightly colored clay figurines to Marseille. Eventually, local artisans beg an to make them in the dress of the period (Ross 1991:60). The Provençal figurines came to be known as *santons* or "little saints."

The Provençal crèches differ in two significant ways from those of other regions (Guieu 1990). First, the birth of Christ is presented in a precise, local setting, along with contemporary Provençal characters. Christ is pictured as born among Provençal people, portrayed carrying on their daily activities. In addition, the *santons* of the Provençal crèche differ by their simplicity. They are generally of small size, and rather than being exquisitely fashioned from rare woods, ivory, and fine textiles, they are made of raw clay, fired and handpainted with watercolors or acrylics. Simple in their origins, the Provençal *santons* were not destined for the homes of aristocrats or for display in churches. Since they were relatively inexpensive and simply crafted, they had a gentle appeal and became popular with both the rich and the poor.

Clay *santons* as we know them today date back only 200 years. Since the *santon* tradition emerged at the time of the French Revolution, the figurines[3] include, in addition to the biblical personages and animals, about 150 characters portraying humble folk, not the monarchy and the bourgeoisie. They include the peasants and tradesmen of the typical Provençal village. The highest placed *santon* is the mayor, with his tricolor sash. He is represented because of his important position in the local community.

Farmyard animals — horses, sheep, lambs, goats, geese, ducks, chicks, pigs, hens, cats, and the shepherds' dogs — are also a significant and lively element of the crèche. Their presence has inspired the imagination of people through the ages (Foley 1959: 105-08) and a number of Provençal folk tales owe their origin to this presence. One tale is about the ox whose cave became the birthplace of the child. Another is about the donkey Ali who carried Mary on his back to Bethlehem. One of the best known legends is that of the golden goat, a mythical creature who wanders in the moonlight and is the protector of ancient monuments and ruins. There is also the belief that cats receive the power of speech on Christmas eve, but alas, they speak only in Provençal.

The *santons* also include (Guieu 1989:3-4) literary characters, such as Tartarin de Tarascon, a character from Alphonse Daudet's 1872 novel, and props with cultural connotations, such as the windmill at Fontvieille, where Daudet wrote his short stories, *Lettres de mon moulin*. There are also some special characters, the making of a particular *santon*-maker or *santonnier*.

Each *santon* tells his or her own story by the modest yet meaningful gift[4] which he or she brings to the newborn child (Dufrenne, Potier, and Carbonel 1986; Foley 1959; Guieu 1990). For example, shepherd Gervais brings a wheel of cheese. The drummer brings music, which he plays on the drum and the flute. A woman offers a cradle so that the child may be more comfortable. The mayor carries no gift in his hands, but instead will offer a speech. The animals keep the baby comfortable with their warm breath. Students certainly have a wide selection from which to choose!

The making of *santons* continues as a cottage industry and entire families are often involved in their production. Many well known *santonniers* are active today in Aubagne, Aix, and Marseille. They use their own imagination as to costumes, coloring, and posture of the *santons*. In 1803 (Foley 1959:88), the first *Santon* Fairs were held in Marseille and Aix. Every December these *Foires aux Santons* are held and many people start or complete their crèches with purchases from these fairs. If one has the opportunity to visit Provence, collections may be viewed in the shops and museums in Marseille and nearby towns.

Suggestions For Classroom Adaptation

While the *santon*-making project involving the art and French teachers was part of the curriculum for students in French IV (high school juniors and seniors) at the Illinois Mathematics and Science Academy, suggestions offered may be adapted for use in kindergarten, and primary and middle schools (Butler 1965; Françoise 1953). They also may be appropriate for adult education programs.

Singing Songs and Writing Short Poems about the *Santons*

Younger children may delight in singing songs about the *santons*. The charming book, *The Saintons Go to Bethlehem* (Hill and Maxwell 1935) presents accompaniments for 20 different songs of the *santons*. They are adaptations of old Provençal folk songs, each one featuring a different *santon*.

Dramatic Presentations

In some kindergartens or primary schools it may be possible to follow the old Provençal custom of presenting a Christmas play of the crèche (a *pastorale* or *crèche vivante*) some time during the week before Christmas. The roles of the *santons* are taken by the children, who may also wish to stage a mini-parade or Christmas March to the Star (Butler 1965) in their costumes before the play begins. Hill and Maxwell (1935) include several full page pictures which suggest simple ideas for the staging of the scenes. Arranged in appropriate order, the whole book of songs may form a Christmas play or *pastorale*.

Another option for dramatization might be a playlet which demonstrates how the making of *santons* could involve the whole family (de Sales 1987:65-68). Children may take the roles of parents or children in telling the steps involved in making the *santons*: clay, color, and love.

Making *Santons* from Red Clay

True *santons* are molded from the red clay of Provence. The red-colored terra cotta clay available to schools here provides students with an opportunity to create an "authentic" *santon*. After studying the individual characteristics of a number of *santons*, each student selects a character and an animal whose "story" and gift appeal in a personal way. Under the direction of the art and French teachers, students fashion their two figurines. They allow the figurines to dry slowly, and after they are fired, paint them with acrylics. Although some colors are significant (red, for example, is a sign of status and wealth), students should be allowed to use their creativity, as do true *santonniers*, in making and painting their *santons*.

An Alternative to Working with Clay

An enjoyable alternative to creating with clay is to enlarge pictures of *santons* using the overhead projector to project larger pictures from a transparency onto poster board or construction paper. The pictures are colored with felt tip pens and may be laminated, or simply used as they are, to create an interesting classroom display.

Oral Presentations and Evaluation of the Completed Projects

Upon completion of the *santons* each student gives a brief oral presentation in French about his/her *santons*, and about the significance of the gifts offered by the *santons*. Students are evaluated on how well they have followed instructions in making their *santons*. Consideration also is given to creativity, accuracy in depicting the personage or animal, and cultural sensitivity.

A *Santon* Social

A party or tea, just prior to the Christmas vacation, provides a joyful send-off and an opportunity for the youngsters to display their *santons* and share the various aspects of their *santon*-making experience with other students and teachers. Administrators and parents could be invited as well. Such a social function provides an effective way for other members of the school community to recognize the accomplishments of the students and the excellence of the French program.

A Field Trip

Santons are fascinating to collect and displays of *santons* may be found not only in museums, but anywhere where someone has developed a love for them. A field trip[5] may be organized in order to view such a display. It is useful for students to see a wide array of the figurines before embarking on their own project. The field trip experience would provide them with a context for their work.

Applications to Other Languages

The approach and procedures described in this paper are appropriate, not only for different stages of learning, but also for the teaching of other languages and cultures. Teachers of other languages may wish to develop an interdisciplinary project which would bring students into direct contact with salient cultural features of the language which they teach.

APPENDIX I

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APPENDIX II

Some *Santons* and Their Gifts

Baker	Carries a basket of bread, pompes and fougasses, the favorite cakes of the Provençal Christmas season.
Chimney Sweep	Carries his brushes and his marmotte (woodchuck).
Crèche Scene	The foundation of the crèche setting may be a model of a Provençal farmhouse, or simply a barn. A mill, a well, a fountain, together with miniature trees, moss, rocks, sand and colored paper (*papier-rocher*, if possible)are often used to make the setting colorful and elaborate.
Fishwife	Carries baskets of fish, shiny scales fastened at her waist.
Mayor	A portly gentleman, the mayor sometimes carries a lantern and an umbrella. He wears a blue, white, and red sash.
A Peasant Woman	Carries a one-half liter can. The metricsystem has been used in France since 1801.
Ravi	Village simpleton, with arms raised in wonder, and his female counterpart, *la Ravido*.
Shepherd	Portrayed in both upright and kneeling positions, often with a sheep or lamb. The old shepherd has a white beard and leans on a long staff. The younger shepherd carries a sheep on his shoulders.
Washerwoman	Carries Marseille soap.
Woman with a Brass Footwarmer	Her bright red umbrella is a sign of status and wealth.
Woman from Arles	*L'Arlésienne* wears a traditional, but chic costume. As depicted in the Bizet/Daudet drama, women from Arles have a reputation as heartbreakers.

APPENDIX III

ARLÉSIENNE

FEMME À LA CRUCHE

FEMME À LA POULE

FEMME AU JAMBON

LE CHIEN

LA CHÈVRE

With permission of the artist, MARCEL CARBONEL, Les Ateliers Marcel Carbonel

LE BERGER VIEUX

MAIRE

TAMBOURINAIRE

HOMME AUX POULES

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With permission of the artist,
SUZANNE V. GONZALEZ

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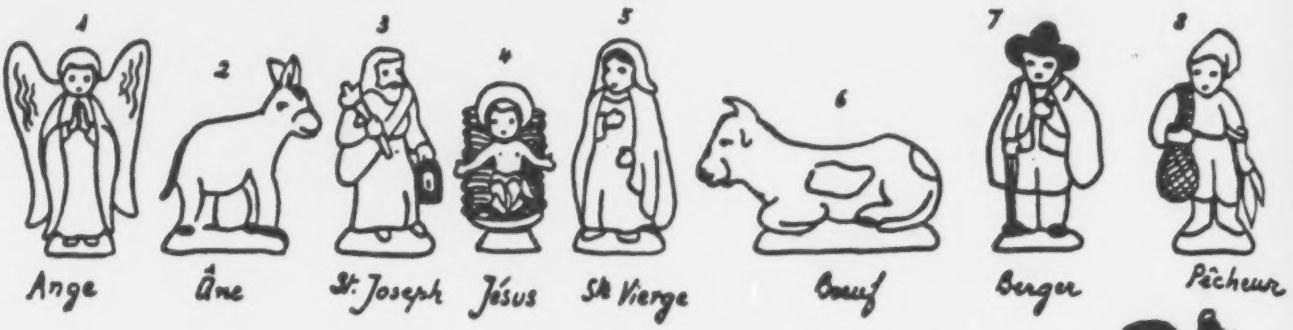
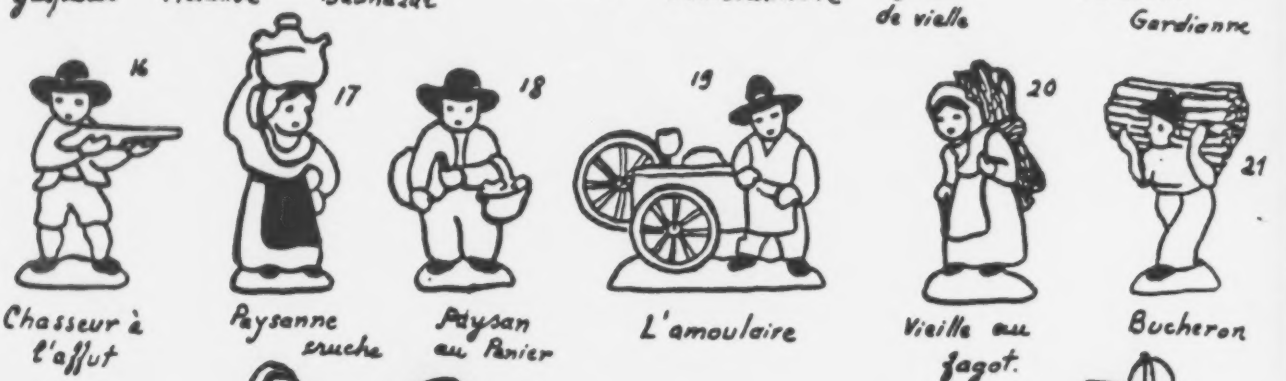
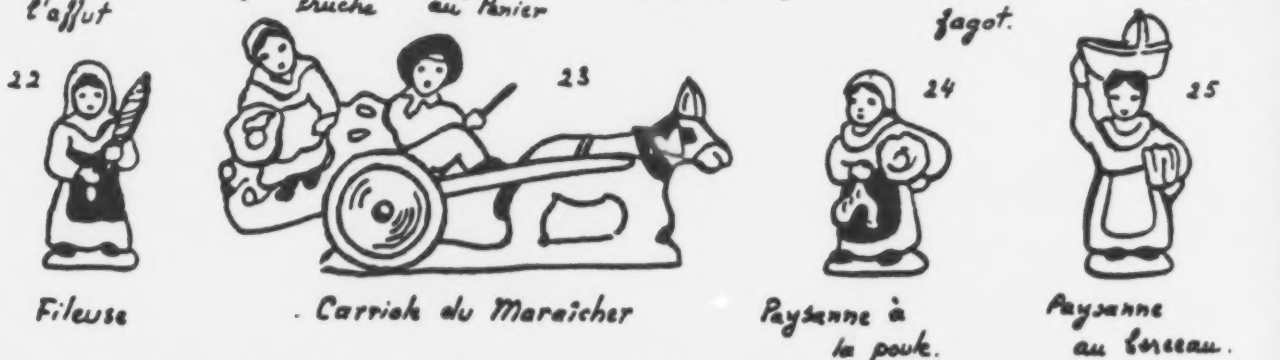
Some "santons"

1 An angel. 2. The donkey 3. Joseph 4. Jesus 5. Mary 6. The Ox 7. The shepherd. 8. The fisherman 9. King Gaspar 10. King Melchior 11. King Balthasar 12. The mayor 13 Tambourine player 14. Hurdy-gurdy man 15. Watchman and his wife.







16. Hunter on the watch 17. Woman with pitcher 18. Peasant with basket 19. The scissors-grinder 20. Old woman 21. The woodcutter 22. The spinner 23. Market wagon 24. Woman with hen 25. Woman with cradle.

Courtesy of Cultural Services of the French Embassy

Reproduction of drawings by Mr. André Filippi

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Endnotes

1. The *santon*-making project and part of the research reported here were carried out while I was on the faculty of the Illinois Mathematics and Science Academy (IMSA), Aurora, Illinois. Teachers at IMSA are challenged "to forge interdisciplinary connections," not just between mathematics and science, but throughtout the curriculum. Barbara Reardon, leader of the art team, provided the guidelines and worked closely with the students as they made their *santons*.

2. This review of textbooks assumed that course content in schools derives primarily form textbooks.

3. I am grateful to Marcel Carbonel, world renowned *santonnier*, Ateliers Marcel Carbonel, Marseille, France, for his permission to use figures from the book, *Petit dictionnaire des Santons de Provence*. I also thank Suzanne Gonzalez, Department of Art, University of Illinois, Urbana, Illinois, for permission to use her drawings of *santons*. The Cultural services of the French Embassy in New York have long made available to teachers *santon* drawings by André Filippi. Examples of the work of these artists may be seen in Appendix II.

4. Examples of the gifts brought by the santons may be found in Appendix III.

5. Theresa Murphy, of "Le Paradou", a Provençal specialty shop, 316 Campbell Street, Genva, Illinois, graciously invited IMSA students to visit her *santon* display and gave permission to photograph her *santons* for use in the interdisciplinary project described in this paper.

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MORE THAN A REQUIRED SKILL IN TODAY'S CURRICULUM: CRITICAL THINKING AND COLLABORATIVE LEARNING IN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

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Abstract

Through the process of critical thinking and in a collaborative learning environment, foreign language instruction can be more than a required skill; it is an integral part of a liberal education. Critical thinking is part of the basic process of learning, not a higher order of thinking to be saved for advanced courses. Students thinking in foreign language and literature courses gain ownership of their learning as they dare to take risks and imagine beyond the confines of rote memory. Collaborative learning is an ideal setting for students to be able to share their discoveries and test their grasp of information among their peers.

Overly ambitious textbooks, inexperienced instructors, strict disciplinary boundaries, prevocational curricula, and administrators' demands for accountability are some of the factors that contribute to foreign languages' low priority on college campuses. Our task is to devise ways to challenge students' old modes of thinking while simultaneously providing structures and support for the development of new ones. Even in elementary foreign language courses, students can be encouraged to think, e.g., to compare and contrast, give opinions, discover patterns, imagine, guess, evaluate given information to make and justify predictions, and reconstruct in their own words. In this way, students feel intellectually challenged and view the course as a worthwhile academic endeavor.

Process and environment are keys to learning. Effective foreign language instruction encourages the learning process of critical thinking in a collaborative learning environment. When college students in foreign language and literature classes are challenged and encouraged to think critically (to the extent that they can discover systems and imagine applications), the results encourage involvement in interactive learning at levels that correspond to other academic disciplines. The non-threatening environment of collaboration encourages students to dare to think critically and provides the incentive for their taking ownership of their learning—the key to academic success.

It is detrimental to our profession that many persist in viewing foreign language study as a required skill to be mastered and not necessarily as an integral part of the general college curriculum. At the crux of the problem is that many educators, both within and outside our field, see foreign language study, particularly at the elementary and intermediate levels, as primarily mechanical manipulation of learned material. This is an outdated perception.

All too frequently our colleagues consider foreign language instruction as no more than a basic skill to be learned, preferably before coming to college. At my college, for example, at the onset of a curricular revision, a task force report divided the students' program into 1) general education (interdisciplinary courses and science); 2) required category (mathematics, foreign languages, and creative/performative expression; and 3) distribution requirements. The required category could be fulfilled by passing a proficiency test, in some cases meaning that a student would not have to take any college courses at all in these areas. The implication here was firstly to disassociate foreign languages from the general thrust of the college and secondly to see the courses as merely an exit requirement instead of part of the college experience.

Many of our colleagues and students assume that foreign language classes consist of drills and tests on nouns, verbs, and vocabulary lists; tedious nightly assignments; a stiff grading policy; and the professor's insistence that students achieve total grammatical accuracy and perfect pronunciation. Some feel that literature courses deal with esoteric foreign writers who are unknown to American readers. Of course faculty opinion is frequently based on their own experiences in foreign language classes; many would report memories of poor grades and picky professors intent on humiliating students in class. Unfortunately, foreign language departments have fueled that argument by relegating language courses to junior faculty or teaching assistants and giving little prestige to research in pedagogy. Serious business, on the other hand, that is upper-level literature classes, are taught by senior faculty who are active and respected researchers.

Our colleagues remain amazingly uninformed about foreign languages. The following examples from my college are representative of general faculty perception. An experienced English professor confessed his concern that foreign language professors were probably too narrowly trained in linguistics to deal adequately with literature. In fact, just the opposite is true; most of us have literary training but spend a good deal of our time teaching language, often without formal training. A philosophy professor, curious about the nature of a foreign language instructors' research, finally concluded after my explanations about literary and linguistic focuses, that we must do essentially what English professors do, but in another language. The most telling remark came from a psychology professor concerned that too many of her advisees were having to take a foreign language, based on the placement test. She retorted that students have better things to do in college than to have to study a foreign language.

So where is foreign language learning in the scheme of serious academic endeavor? Many current perceptions of foreign language learning are linked to the history of language and linguistics in the United States, combining the legacies of the grammar translation method, the audio-lingual approach, and Chomskyan linguistics. Despite these false starts, there are some encouraging signs. Efforts are being made to address subject matter outside of the traditional domain of foreign language instruction, such as Latin American history taught in Spanish or Spanish for Business. Some (Chaput 1991: 36 Klein 1991: 29), however, are concerned that this "content-based instruction" implies that foreign language instruction in itself is meaningless unless framed in more pragmatic terms. In some colleges, foreign languages are being introduced across the curriculum in the manner of the familiar English-based Writing Across the Curriculum Programs. There seems to be a general national interest in international topics, including the learning of foreign languages, particularly in order to compete in world markets. This means more students of traditional and non-traditional age are attempting such languages as Spanish, Japanese, and Russian for practical reasons. The movements to include study of Western and non-Western culture and the focus on American pluralism incorporate the languages and cultures we are teaching into a broader scope. Thus, one valid way to look at foreign language study is to see it as a means of making connections with other topic areas and with larger issues of human experience.

Unfortunately, there are several negative forces at work. In the first place, colleges are making increased demands for accountability. They want students to be able to be fluent in a language quickly, and with the least upset to the existing college program, and at the least cost, It is often assumed that after completing a two-year language requirement, one knows that language and is

fluent. Of course, this search for a quick fix is an impossible demand placed on us; besides, who says they "know" physics, philosophy, sociology or any other content area? The economic recession has forced students to shop for colleges where they can obtain a diploma with a given concentration (to guarantee employment after graduation); this may be a focus on physical therapy, for example, in lieu of the traditional liberal arts. Furthermore, textbooks have traditionally tried to cram so much into each book that instructors feel compelled to "cover" the material at the expense of innovative teaching methods. These unexciting courses and will not encourage students to pursue language study beyond the requirements.

An imagined hierarchy of academic disciplines, currently exists with science at the top, moving downward to business through social science to liberal arts. The latter category moves down from mathematics to philosophy to history and English, and finally to foreign languages and music. Education is somewhere in a third-tier category. We pay instructors according to these guidelines, so it is not surprising that students judge the disciplines in much the same way. Since many think that science is more complex (and more relevant) than foreign languages, beginning college students often see science as the source of authority and certainty. Nevertheless, they might also be encouraged to include personal and subjective elements as part of the thought process.

Many assume critical thinking to be a higher order of thinking, often related to logic and the scientific method. Smith instead refers to "commonplace thinking" (1990: 11) that is going on all the time, that everybody does, and that is not unusual or special. And more importantly, commonplace thinking is complex, fundamental, and not restricted to one discipline. Granted, there is a difference between knowledge acquired and used in everyday life and that available in chemistry and physics. Nevertheless, the difference is related to the subject matter and the level of generality achieved. It cannot be that chemistry and physics are "scientific" and therefore superior, while other knowledge is inferior in quality (Meehan 1988: 20).

There is a general assumption that higher-order thinking is a superior mix of high-value attributes or components, such as planning, predicting, monitoring, evaluating, and asking questions, produced through such procedures as analysis, synthesis, induction, and deduction. This so-called higher-order thinking is presumed to be more complex, requiring more attention and a superior brain. Obviously, then, if this were true, not everyone could be expected to be capable of reaching elevated levels of thought. The implication is that professors or students who do well at academic subjects (probably meaning earners of high grades) are the only natural and accomplished higher-order thinkers.

This attitude is frequently carried over into foreign language and literature classes. We assume that beginning language learners need to be involved in memorizing vocabulary lists and verb charts in order to have the tools to communicate accurately. On the one hand, for some of our colleagues, collaborative learning, now frequent practice in secondary schools, might be too far from serious academic endeavor. And on the other hand, undergraduates don't want to take foreign languages to be treated as children, having to role play and recite mind-numbing details about what their parents do, how many brothers and sisters they have, and what they did last summer. Not until students reach advanced conversation and composition courses (and naturally by then the weaker ones will be weeded out) will we ask them to "think" in class. In literature classes, students usually start with a survey of literature class in which everything is presented

in chronological order so that they have the basis for thinking in-depth about specific genres and authors.

This categorization of thinking into lower and higher order is erroneous and results in deceptive behavior. Our brains are constantly solving problems as we learn, remember, or make sense of something. Smith (1990: 44) emphasizes that remembering, understanding learning, and thinking are all part of a single, continual, undifferentiated event—the brain at work, going about its own affairs. If some psychologists label infant language learning as problem-solving based on learning by experiment and hypothesis testing (Smith 1990: 17), how can we determine that no problem solving should go on in our classes until advanced-level courses? Thinking is easy and effective if people are in control of their own affairs, but thinking is difficult when imposed on us by someone else.

The implications for us as educators are clear. If we allow students to think about things they are naturally involved in, they will make sense easily of what they are doing. However, if we thwart this process by insisting that they concentrate on irrelevant information within contrived situations, learning might be difficult, inefficient, and unrewarding.

The key to teaching students to think is not to have specific courses in critical thinking, but rather to establish a learning environment that gives students license to think. Students often demand one right answer to a problem and are disoriented when they are faced with alternative correct answers. We have to devise ways to challenge students' old modes of thinking while simultaneously providing structures and support for the development of new ones.

So where do we go from here to upgrade foreign language instruction from basic skills building to critical thinking? Keep in mind that 'thinking' students are engaged in their work and can claim ownership of their learning. This feeling of accomplishment together with an independence from authoritarian professors encourages students to persevere. They consider themselves intelligent for being able to figure out things instead of having lists given to them that they have to regurgitate. Furthermore, students appear to retain what they discover themselves better than a series of seemingly unrelated or meaningless facts and grammatical structures. In the collaborative setting, students feel comfortable working with peers as helpers, and in essence they are pre-testing themselves before assessment by the professors.

There are several steps to get students to think critically in foreign language classes. First, the professor should establish a comfortable learning environment for students so that they are not afraid to take risks and to dare to express their own opinions about language or literature. The professor leads students through activities in which they think as they experience language. Tasks and time to carry them out are clearly defined, models for procedures are given at the onset, students help each other carry out these tasks, the professor circulates to monitor group work, and evaluation procedures are discussed. This means that students know what is expected of them and how to get there.

The following activities encourage students to think and are appropriate for various levels of foreign language instruction. First by becoming acquainted with language in context, students can discover patterns and then use them in new situations. Later, they can personalize information, compare their own and classmates' opinions, summarize what others have said, imagine other

possibilities, identify major conflicts, recreate a conversation between different characters than the one just heard or read, or predict the future.

In elementary Spanish, for example, students can imagine a bizarre past summer or weigh the appropriateness of a parent's travel recommendations instead of having to answer the typical questions about what they did last summer. They can use a few clues to guess other details, evaluate given data to make and justify predictions, create episodes for a soap opera, respond to a letter, organize information according to a prescribed order, or write a story as a group. Other options might include imagining a story based on a picture sequence or circulating among classmates to gather certain information.

In beginning literature classes, after having finished a work, each student can identify a topic of interest related to the reading—theme(s), style, relationship to another work, point of view, narrative perspective, etc. Then, the instructor and class can refine and list each student's topic so that all students can complete their assignment: 1) preparing a short statement/treatment of the designated topic; 2) preparing several questions to ask students on the topic; and 3) preparing other students' topics to the extent that they will be ready to answer the others' questions. Evaluation of the presentations includes how they present their own topic as well as how they respond to questions posed by others. Students are very receptive to this approach because they have created and developed their own textual focus, in many cases their discussion topics will be very creative.

An alternative to this procedure is to prepare a list of possible discussion topics. When students arrive in class they divide into small groups, they might select a topic from the list and get started on the group procedure. Sometimes, the presentation is oral (in the same or following class session), or it might take the form of a written group essay. In all cases, there is class discussion after students have had time to prepare the topics.

'Thinking' students are not only healthier academically, but they are happier with themselves. Our goal is not to settle for students regurgitating information, whether it be grammatical structures or plot summaries. Instead, students should be able to deduce language and stylistic patterns within manageable guidelines. As educators, we must allow them to test their hypotheses among their classmates and learn to give and take constructive criticism. The results are more stimulating classes and truly engaged students who want to continue their foreign language study.

In conclusion, our future tasks are clear. As foreign language professionals, we may think that we direct our own public relations campaign. The fact is that students are the ones spreading the word. Remember, we are dealing with thinking adults whom we are encouraging to think critically. Thinking people won't stand for being talked at in class; they want to do their own thing. Of course, foreign language instruction is a serious matter, and naturally students have to master grammatical structures and principles of literary analysis, but class time should be devoted to using this information actively, not merely to listening to discussion about it. If they are pleased with their active involvement in learning a foreign language to the extent that they have been encouraged to stretch their mind and imagination, they will be all to happy to tell our colleagues.

The road is clear. We start by providing a learning environment for students to be able to think critically. Our next task is to communicate with our colleagues and discuss (not just among ourselves, but for the wider college community) what goes on in foreign language classes today. We need to get involved in curricular planning and in teaching interdisciplinary courses to show that foreign languages are not just a required skill but part of process of involving students in thinking. If the goal of a college education is to prepare people for life, shouldn't the ability to think critically rank top on the list? It's a sure bet; we get our own house in order and we'll upgrade the neighborhood.

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MUSIC AS MEANS TO ENHANCE CULTURAL AWARENESS AND LITERACY IN THE FOREIGN LANGUAGE CLASSROOM

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Abstract

The use of music in the foreign language classroom offers a unique approach to enhance students' awareness of another culture, and also can aid in the practice of communication skills. Music provides an interesting mirror of the history, literature, and culture of a country, which can be seen in song texts, and in musical style. Musical styles and textual themes, along with pronunciation variations and dialects among countries speaking the same language, allow an opportunity for students to glimpse other societies representative of the target language.

In addition, music texts offer a unique means of reinforcing speaking, listening, reading, and writing skills through specially designed activities. Suitable music choices range from classical art music to popular contemporary music of all styles, and include traditional folk and children's songs.

Music may be a powerful motivator in the classroom due to American students' general interest in music. The use of music in the classroom is also justified by Gardner's educational theory of multiple intelligences, which implies that a person's intelligence and interest in music can be utilized to achieve skills in non-musical areas such as foreign languages.

The use of music in the foreign language classroom offers a unique approach to the study of culture through texts and musical styles, and at the same time the music activities can reinforce the four communication skills within the target language. Since music does not exist in a vacuum, it provides an interesting mirror of the history, literature, and culture of a country. Music also represents a common interest uniting many American students, and it appears to be an important aspect of their life, evident by the pervasive proliferation in the United States of records, tapes, music videos, MTV, radio programs, concerts, and identification with recording stars. If this music interest could be harnessed, teachers would have a powerful motivator and could add another dimension to class activities.

The use of music to enhance learning is justified by the educational theory of "multiple intelligences" (Gardner 1985), which asserts that people possess varying degrees of musical, linguistic, logical-mathematical, spatial, bodily-kinesthetic, and personal intelligences. The practical aspect of this theory for all teachers is the idea that any of the intelligences can be exploited as a means of transmission, even though the actual material to be mastered falls into only one of the domains. Gardner (1985: 278) states that all normal (non brain-damaged) people possess some musical intelligence. Therefore, even though foreign language teachers are not interested in developing musical intelligence, they could use students' musical intelligence (and interest!) to achieve mastery of certain other skills. Music can be integrated into classroom activities, without assuming that a teacher or student can compose or perform music. Thus, the function of music becomes that of a teaching tool, similar to audiovisual material or computer software.

Foreign language teachers have always been innovative in methodology. The past twenty years have witnessed many new approaches, like "total physical response" (cf. Asher 1988),

incorporation of the visual arts for cultural awareness and proficiency activities, consistent use of audio, visual, and computer equipment, and cooperative learning in the form of role-playing and conversation activities. Foreign language catalogs are rich in books, games, software, videos, and other activities and devices designed to make learning fun and easy. Certainly, musical activities like singing have been utilized in many foreign language classrooms.

However, music as a systematic method to reinforce communication skills and demonstrate culture is a less explored aspect, and a survey of the last two decades of journals for foreign language teachers shows only a few articles on the subject compared to multitudinous articles on other methodological ideas. All too often, music in the classroom has been relegated to recreation and entertainment status. Unfortunately, music has not usually been a feature of textbook series, but some newer series for secondary schools mention music as a cultural aspect of the country and important in the life of teenagers, but usually without any examples in their otherwise extensive kits of videos and audiovisual aids.[1] Proficiency activities using music are rare.

This article will demonstrate how music activities can be incorporated in the classroom to practice communication skills and enhance cultural awareness. Proficiency activities for listening, speaking, reading, and writing will be offered first, since this is perhaps the least recognized capacity of music, and yet one of the most useful for teachers, especially at the beginning levels. The second section will feature the value of music texts for their cultural implications. Last will be suggestions for promoting cultural awareness through musical style.

Proficiency Activities For Communication

Music can be incorporated into listening, speaking, reading and writing activities in all languages, and adapted for all ages and levels.[2] The struggling student may find communication skills easier when linked to music, since many people often remember rhyme, rhythm or melody better than ordinary speech. Activities with songs possess the communicative aspect of language coupled with the entertainment aspect of music (Jolly, 1975: 11). Practically all grammar points can be found in music texts, and the texts also offer a wide variety of vocabulary, all of which can be utilized to practice the four communication skills.

To check listening comprehension, the song text can be provided and students can mark the frequency of words upon hearing the song, cross out the letters not pronounced, find homonyms, fill in the missing words in sentences from the song, and order a list of words as they appear in the song. These activities will make students visually conscious and alert them to phonetic peculiarities. As Leith (1979: 540) states:

> "There is probably not a better nor quicker way to teach phonetics than with songs. Phonetics instruction is one good use to which songs can be put even in beginning classes."

Along with listening comprehension, pronunciation skills can be strengthened through music activities. The music text can demonstrate liaison, linking, colloquial contractions, and rhyme and rhythm of syllables. Repeating lines with rhythm and correct sounds will help students remember the pronunciation. In her music research, Elliot determined that a song repeated many times with pleasure puts students in the habit of using the structures correctly while mastering the content at the same time (Elliott, 1977: 400). Students also can practice distinguishing difficult sounds, create new lines, and focus on the words' rhyme and rhythm. Along with simple pronunciation

exercises, students can practice conversation skills, since most song texts lend themselves to questions and answers. In addition, stories in songs can be expanded orally, summarized, described, or dramatized.

Music activities can aid in the complex, and sometimes difficult, task of improving reading skills. Rivers has developed lengthy strategies to advance the skill of reading in the target language based on the premise that students learn to read what they can say, emphasizing sound-symbol correspondence (1987), verifying the importance of listening and speaking activities in learning to read. This correlates with the use of music, by practicing auditory discrimination, in teaching reading skills in the native language (Yaakob, 1973:577).

Activities for reading comprehension may include underlining certain vocabulary, answering questions about the song text in a true-false or multiple-choice format, translating the lyrics, arranging spelling games based on the lyrics, and locating certain grammar points such as negative phrases, adjectives, or direct objects. Vocabulary development for more fluent reading may include identifying cognates, distinguishing slang from informal language, matching words of songs with synonyms or antonyms, finding gender of new vocabulary by clues in the song, and circling categories of words, like food or colors. More advanced students can perhaps discover the meaning of new words from the cultural context.

Along with reading, writing activities can incorporate music. Students can practice spelling by filling in the missing words from a printed song text. Other activities include personalizing the song by changing names and places, or substituting words in the lines. Students may progress from writing summaries or expressing opinions of the song to writing their own song texts.

Of course, any of the above suggested activities could be executed with ordinary speech, but music provides additional interest for the student and taps one of the multiple intelligences. In addition, music may be a way of reaching students who may not respond to traditional teaching styles, since "music motivates learning" and contributes to a relaxed, informal atmosphere (Leith, 1979: 539). Furthermore, songs could be illustrated or dramatized, and perhaps videotaped for another class or for younger audiences. Music could be the stimulus which makes communication pleasant (McKenna, 1977: 42).

The choice of a song for communication activities is somewhat dependent upon the instructional point desired, the level of language development, and the age of the student. Optimal choices are clear recordings with minimal accompaniment to allow the voice and text to be clearly understood, and a tempo appropriate for the listener. Folksongs and children's songs often will contain the desired grammar point or vocabulary and include many repetitive phrases that will be useful in the planned activity.

Even though textbook series do not usually include activities utilizing music in practicing communication skills, a few publishers and individuals have created music tapes with texts and activities or suggestions.[3] Sometimes it may be helpful to use songs written expressly for teaching, which can be found in various publishers' catalogs. These songs are suitable for older as well as younger students, especially if approached as "games", making it clear that the music is for a special purpose. In these teaching songs the vocabulary is controlled and usually

categorized. The example in Figure 1, available on cassette and with the printed text, is a seven-stanza song about the days of the week with basic vocabulary and elementary grammar.

Figure 1

"Aujourd'hui" (Kay)[4]	'Today'
Aujourd'hui c'est lundi	Today is Monday
Qu'est-ce que tu vas faire?	What are you going to do?
Je vais aller à la pêche	I am going to go fishing
A la rivière.	At the river.

With this simple stanza a variety of activities can be used in oral or written form. Basic questions (Figure 2) can be answered from the song text in Figure 1, or for more advanced students, questions like the last one on the list could require a creative explanation.

Figure 2

Qu'est-ce que tu vas faire lundi?	(what)
Quand est-ce que tu vas aller à là pêche?	(when)
Ou'est-ce que tu vas?	(where)
Pourquoi est-ce que tu vas à la pêche?	(why)

Vocabulary comprehension could be checked by a matching list from the song text (Figure 3).

Figure 3

la rivière - faire la pêche	(place - activity)
lundi - faire la pêche	*(day - activity)*

Students could invent new stanzas (Figure 4).

Figure 4

Aujourd'hui c'est ***mercredi***
Où vas-tu ***Rénee****?*
Je vais ***dîner avec Jean***
Dans un café*.*

Another activity could include changing from first to third person (Figure 5).

Figure 5

Qu'est-ce ***qu'il va*** *faire?*
Il va *aller à la pêche.*

Although special teaching songs, like the one in Figure 1, are useful, students enjoy hearing popular songs in the target language. Popular music, that which is designated as having achieved public acceptance, noted quantitatively in music publications and surveys (Cooper, 1979: 37), has drawbacks because of the difficulty in locating examples, and finding texts or transcribing them. Furthermore, the pop music field is constantly changing and it can be difficult to keep up with the latest hits and styles, and certainly it is impossible to guess what kinds of music will appeal

to which student and class. In addition, popular songs may present problems for the teacher because of the uncontrolled vocabulary, colloquialisms and slang, and more advanced grammatical structures. However, a careful perusal of songs will procure refrains with simple verbs, cognates, and repetition. The activities using the rather simple pop song text in Figure 6 could focus on "*ER*" verbs, contractions, and direct objects, while the general idea of the song is easily understood.

Figure 6

*"**Oui je l'adore**"* (Esther)
Oui j'l'adore, c'est mon amour, mon trésor,
Oui j'l'adore, tous les jours un peu plus fort.

Students may be intrigued by the mixture of languages and the rap style of the example in Figure 7. They could be encouraged to guess the French words, act out the motions, or try translating the entire song into one language.

Figure 7

"Frenglish Rap" (Sebastian D.)
Put on the music and donnez-moi the sound,
On clappe dans nos mains we are toute une bande.
We dance and we jive to keep on the beat,
You don't have to be shy soyez nice and sweet.

Music may allow a teacher to introduce a more advanced text through music because, unlike spoken conversation, there are pitches and melodies, rhymes, and beats and measured phrases, that may help students remember vocabulary or grammatical structures and aid in comprehending the general meaning. Even with more advanced texts, it is still possible to arrange activities for beginners. For example, with the song text in Figure 8, beginning students could cross out silent letters, an especially useful task in studying third-person plural verb endings in French.

Figure 8

"Pourtant" (Voisine)
Je vi ma vie comme un incompris,
Parmi ces gens autour de moi
Qui chantent, qui rient, qui pleurent, qui crient.

Comedy is always enjoyable, especially with nonsense rhymes that even the beginner can imitate immediately, as in the rap-style top hit in Figure 9.

Figure 9

"Bo le lavabo" (LaGaf')
Eh, oh, eh, oh, qu'il est beau, qu'il est beau,
qu'il est beau le lavabo, lavabo, il est beau le lavabo

Music Texts As a Mirror Of Culture

When using music texts to practice communication skills, teachers also have an opportunity to introduce the cultural context of the song. One of the few music/language researchers states that a song is an ideal marriage of poetry and music, and is one of the most authentic expressions of people, their feelings, and their everyday life (Delière, 1985: 412). Music texts representing various subjects can be found in popular contemporary music, with its themes of love, death, war, social problems, school and teen activities. Music could be used to support other material for cultural units, or realia in the classroom. Music could also be a basis for a culture course, as Abrate, an expert in using music in the classroom, has devised, creating units with specific songs for geography/travel, family life, education, work/leisure, government, and everyday life.[5] Several songs on similar themes could be used to give differing views, or the same song performed by different singers may offer different interpretations or textual changes.[6]

Music texts also can introduce cultural differences among countries which speak the target language. Folk and popular music from various Latin American countries may present nationalistic views. Canadian songsters, like Michel Rivard in "*Le Coeur de ma vie*," often sing of Québécois pride. In addition, linguistic differences appear in regional variations and dialects in songs from different countries. For French classes, examples of Creole texts are available (Zook Machine).

Besides gaining insight into the lives of people in other cultures, American students may be interested in what others think of the United States. The list in Figure 10 offers various views of American culture portrayed in French, Spanish, and German songs.

Figure 10

"Long is the Road" (Goldman) - a story of immigrants
"Kennedy Rose" (Kaas) - a political family
"Mademoiselle chante le blues" (Kaas) - role of women
"El Blues del Esclavo" (Mecano) - slavery
"No Hay Marcha en Nueva York (Mecano) - trip to a city
"New York" (Hagen) - view of a city

Historical topics like the French revolution can benefit from the inclusion of music. In the rock opera (*La Révolution française* Schonberg and Jeannot), all characters of this event are represented by different types of music. The clergy sings a chant-like melody with a pipe organ accompaniment, the French citizens sing in a rock style, the King's children sing playful tunes, and other personages are portrayed appropriately.[7] Because music evokes an emotional response, the use of this musical story portrays the revolution not just as an historic, but also as a human event. For Spanish classes, *Evita* (Rice and Weber), a rock opera written in English but available in Spanish, may be an interesting way to introduce Argentina.

Abrate believes that many popular songs "represent a literary genre in themselves" and certain song poets rank with literary poets, and their texts are suitable for literary study (1983: 11). In addition, interesting themes can be found in earlier "art songs" (classical music) as well. Literature and poetry are often reserved for advanced levels, but they can be introduced sooner since the music makes them more accessible. Poems and stories spring to life when heard in

music versions, like Goethe's "*Erlkönig*" in Schubert's song, where one singer portrays the characters of the son, father, erlking, and narrator, and the piano accompaniment suggests a galloping horse. With a little preparation even beginning students can appreciate this song and gain an understanding of the poem.[8] Students will gain insight into the history and literature of people as well as poetry forms.

Musical Style As A Mirror Of Culture

Besides the use of music texts in the foreign language classroom, a less obvious feature of music is its style, which reflects culture in the choice of instruments, singing style, organization of pitches (melody and harmony), rhythm, and form. The study of musical style is probably the least employed in the foreign language class because the teacher may not feel confident or knowledgeable about music theory and history. Furthermore, not only is this issue of musical style as a reflection of culture not addressed in foreign language texts or research, but musicology research usually focuses on art music, leaving popular music research to ethnomusicologists.

An introduction to various musical styles can provide the global focus necessary in the foreign language classroom, since Americans in general are often ignorant of the music of the non-English speaking world. As a starting point, the foreign language teacher could begin with the spread of American music around the world, since students are likely to be familiar with American music. The United States has influenced music of other countries, especially jazz, rock, country, and rap, and realia might include a "top hits" chart of another country, in which usually one often can find many artists from the United States. In a reversal of this concept, the United States in turn has assimilated musical elements of other cultures, like African rhythms, and Latin American dance styles. Occasionally the same song can be found in English and the target language, which, besides providing a comparison of languages through translation analysis, allows examination of the same musical idea in two cultures.

Musical style from other countries is a good point of departure to explore another culture. Students will react to the music, and they can talk or write about their impression, explain how it is different or similar to music with which they are familiar, and express what they like or dislike about the musical style. The musical style, singing style, vocal accents, and textual themes combine to contribute to cultural awareness. For example, "*Bal Masqué*" (Compagnie Créole), with its culturally significant text describing an important Martinique festival, also features Caribbean instruments, singing styles, and rhythms. Certainly, there are many contemporary and folk examples of various styles from Latin America recorded with native instruments. Teachers of Asian languages will find musical styles in striking contrast to those popular in the United States. However, musical styles of francophone Africa are virtually unexplored, probably due to the diversity of the continent and difficulty in obtaining samples, and the fact that a lot of native music texts are not in French.[9]

A word of caution when introducing the music of a country is necessary, however, because, if the music is limited to only the famous, familiar (e.g., translated American pop music), or out, dated (e.g., some traditional folk music), it may confirm a student's stereotype (that Mexicans only dance the hat dance, for example) and negate the desired goal of appreciation of another culture, or imply that other cultures have nothing to offer and that they only imitate (Griffen, 1977: 943). A goal for the teacher is to introduce variety and diversity in cultures where the

target language is spoken. By incorporating folk and children's music, classical art music, ethnic forms, and the contemporary popular music of a society, teachers will be able to provide a more authentic presentation of a culture's music.[10]

Conclusion

Music comprises three entwined elements, musical style, cultural topics in the text, as well as reinforcement of communication skills through musical activities. The versatility of music provides teachers with a resource to accommodate students' interests, without assuming music talent on the part of the teacher or student. It is not an expensive venture, for one cassette or record can provide many cultural and communication activities that can be adapted for various levels.

Tapping the musical intelligence in the foreign language classroom bridges Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences with actual classroom learning because it responds to students' interests. The addition of music to the foreign language classroom as a teaching method may be a way to focus student attention, and produce a more committed learner. As McKenna (1977: 42) states,

> "Children are influenced most strongly by that which attracts and involves them and a well-chosen song can do both".

Gardner proposes that an intelligence is the ability to solve problems (p. x). Perhaps this could be construed here in the specific context of using music to achieve cultural awareness and communication skills in the target language. Music may be just the answer to accomplish non-musical goals in the foreign language classroom.

Acknowledgement

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APPENDIX I

RESOURCES

GENERAL

Gessler Publishing Co.
55 West 13 Street
New York, NY 10011
(212) 627-0099

Goldsmith's Music Shop
85A Fernwood
New York, NY 11576
(800) 253-5351

Bonjour, Au revoir
(also in Spanish, German)
712 42nd Ave., N.W.
Gig Harbor, WA 98335
(206) 851-8703

Via Music Communications
P.O. Box 42091
Brook Park, OH 44142
(216) 529-8049

Vibrante Press
2430 Juan Tabo, Suite 110
Albuquerque, New Mexico 87112

Teach Me Tapes
10500 Bren Road East
Minneapolis, MN 55343

Sing, Dance, Laugh & Eat Quiche
(Tacos for Spanish, Cheeseburgers for ESL)
945 Hwy 14 East
Janesville, WI 53546
(800) 848-0256

FRENCH

French for Fun
4965 Hames Dr.
Concord, CA 94521
(415) 798-4287

Le Hit Parade
P.O. Box 450
Dayton, OH 45459
(513) 885-3952

Muffin Record Co.
Unit 348, 238 Davenport Rd.
Toronto, Ontario
Canada M4R, IJ6

Les Profs
P.O. Box 19879
Milwaukee, WI 53219
(414) 541-4229

German

Langenscheidt
46-35 54th Road
Maspeth, NY 11378
(718) 784-0055

Singen Macht Spas
German Department
Indiana University of Penn.
Indiana, PA 15705

SPANISH

Teach to the Beat
1268 Pear Wood Way
Uniontown, OH 44685
(216) 896-2756

Songs and Rhymes
Education in Motion
P.O. Box 224
Chico Rivera, CA 90660

APPENDIX II

MUSIC CITED

Compagnie Créole. "Le Bal masqué." *Grands Succes.* Saisons SNS4-90013.

Esther, Pauline. "Oui je l'adore." Polydor 102 8735227.

Goldman, Jean-Jacques. "Long is the Road." *Jean-Jacques Goldman en public.* Epic 450 1914.

Hagen, Nina. "New York." *Heute hier, morgen dort.* Langenscheidt, 1991. Book #49848, Cassette #84519.

Kaas, Patricia. "Kennedy Rose." *Scene de vie.* CBS 4667464.

_____. "Mademoiselle chante le blues." *Patricia Kaas.* Polydor 837356-4.

Kay, Jasper. "Aujourd'hui." *Un Kilo de chansons.* Gessler Publishing Co., #4299.

LaGaf'. "Bo le lavabo." Carrere 171.

Mecano. "El Blues des Esclavo." *Descanso domini cal.* BMGC-807.

_____. "No Hay Marcha en Nueva York." *Descanso dominical.* BMGC-807.

Rice, Tim and Andrew Lloyd Weber. *Evita.* MCA 767310107-4.

Rivard, Michel. "Le Coeur de ma vie." *Michel Rivard.* AD4 10 034.

Schonberg, Claude-Michel and Raymond Jeannot. *La Révolution française.* Tréma 110 296 PM 417.

Sebastian D. "Frenglish Rap." *Je Rap en français.* Station STA4-500.

Voisine, Roch. "Pourtant." BMG 113 092 RC 110.

Zook Machine. *Maldon.* BMG 410244.

Zovi, Lonnie Dai. *Cantiques Rhythmes et rimes.* French adaptation by Virginia Voges. Albuquerque: Vibrante Press, 1991. Book and cassette.

APPENDIX III

LITERATURE SET TO MUSIC - A SELECTED LIST

Below is a selected list of composers from French, German, and Spanish-speaking countries who set poems originally in that language (example: French composers who set French poems). To find possible songs, look under the composer's name in record stores or music libraries. Music stores should have catalogs to order selections that they do not carry. (See also Stevens and Vialet).

FRENCH (poets are in parentheses)

Troubadours (Middle Ages)
Hector Berlioz
Jules Massenet
Camille Saint-Saëns
Ernest Chausson (Maeterlinck)
Henri Duparc (Baudelaire)
Claude Débussy (Verlaine, Villon, Mallarmé)
Francis Poulenc (Eluard, Apollinaire)
Erik Satie
Charles Gounod
Jacques Ibert
Darius Milhaud
Maurice Ravel
Albert Roussel

SPANISH (countries are in parentheses)

Manuel de Falla (Spain)
Manuel Palau (Spain)
Alberto Ginastera (Argentina)
Aurelio de la Vega (Cuba)
Joaquín Turina (Spain)
Felipe Pedrell (Spain)
Carlos Chávez (Mexico)

GERMAN (poets or genres in parentheses)

J. S. Bach (cantatas)
Wolfgang Mozart (operas)
Franz Schubert (Goethe, Schiller, Muller)
Johannes Brahms (Heine, Tiecke)
Gustav Mahler (Ruchert, traditional poems)
Hugo Wolf (Goethe)
Robert Schumann (Heine)
Richard Strauss

Endnotes

1. An example of references to French teenagers and their taste in music occurs in *Nouveaux copains*, the beginning text in a secondary education series published by Harcout Brace Jovanovich (cf. Kennedy et al. 1989). One of their goals is "cultural awareness to broaden understanding" and "cultural authenticity" (1989: P4). The book includes pictures of recording artists, a pop hit list (1989: 281), information about popular music for the teacher (1989: T187-188), and a few songs are included on the cassettes.

2. The activities and suggestions in the examples in this article are ones that I have used in the class room, and are a compilation of original ideas as well as ideas found in the articles by Abrate (1983), Brown (1975), Elliott (1977), Leith (1979), and Melpignano (1980). The types of activities suggested here are by no means comprehensive, and teachers will no doubt modify them and create new ones to suit their needs.

3. See Appendix I for a list of resources for music and activities for communication available through publishers and individuals.

4. See Appendix II for information on music cited in examples.

5. A list of French songs divided into other cultural categories can be found in Hamblin (1987).

6. Frequently mentioned as a good comparison example in French is "*Le Déserteur*", in three versions, performed by Serge Reggiani, Boris Vian, and the American group, Peter, Paul and Mary (Brown 1975: 27-29).

7. Vialet (1992) suggests several cultural and literary teaching ideas for *La Révolution française*, along with other French operas of different time periods.

8. See Appendix III for suggestions of classical music sources for music-literature study.

9. Hamblin (1991) suggests artists from francophone Africa. Another source, *Cantiques rhythmes et rimes* (Zovi), includes activities with Cajun, Haitian, and African music. For musical styles of various countries, the foreign language teacher may find it useful to utilize an elementary school music series like *Silver-Burdette*, which includes recordings of music from around the world.

10. One of the most comprehensive collections of authentic music and texts is Langenscheidt's *Heute hier, morgen dort*, a book and a cassette which contains a mixture of popular, folk, jazz, and classical German songs, as well as translations of popular American songs. Activities for various levels of communication proficiency are included, along with cultural ideas concerning the texts, and information about the musical style.

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Asher, James. 1988. *Learning Another Language Through Actions: The Complete Teacher's Guidebook*. Third edition. Los Gatos, CA: Sky Oaks Productions.

Brown, James W. 1975. "For a Pedagogy of the Song-Poem." *The French Review* 49: 23-31.

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Leith, William. 1979. "Advanced French Conversation through Popular Music." *The French Review* 52: 537-551.

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Rivers, Wilga. 1988. *Teaching French: A Practical Guide*. Lincolnwood, Illinois, second edition.

Silver Burdette Music. 1990. Morristown, N.J.: Silver Burdette Co..

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Vialet, Michele. 1992. "L'Opéra en classe de français: du rock au baroque." *The French Review* 65: 589-601.

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NEAR IMMERSION RESULTS IN ONE-THIRD OF THE TIME

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Abstract

We are all familiar with the success story of Early French Immersion in Canada. By grade 12, many Canadian students in the Province of New Brunswick enrolled in Early Immersion score at level 3 on the Oral Proficiency Scale. (Level 1 - Basic Survival, Level 2 - Social Survival, Level 3 - Work Survival). This is achieved through a French language time-on-task of over 6000 hours accumulated from grades 1 to 12. For an input of 53% French, one can reasonably expect an output of level 3 speaking and writing proficiency.

However, in some rural parts of New Brunswick (where parents consider 53% French input too high and where the sparse population makes it difficult to create French Immersion Centres), a milder form of Immersion was developed in the late 70's. It is called "Extended Core French" or "Single Subject Immersion, grades 7-12". 20% -30% of Extended Core students can reach the oral proficiency level achieved by Early Immersion students.

For a total input of 1750 hours. (French and another subject in French or 15% French overall from grades 1-12), "Extended Core French" students can expect an output of level 2+ proficiency.

These results are of interest to American educators desirous of raising the results of the teaching of any foreign language almost up to the level achievable by total immersion for a quarter of the students enrolled in Extended Core. The generic plan will be explained in detail:

A. Grades 1-6 - enriched Foreign Language course, 30-40 minutes daily; the course is infused with Social Studies, Science, Math, Art, Music, etc. ("Le Francais en Action" by D.C. Heath, Canada.)
B. Grades 7-12 - Single Subject Immersion: Core French, plus another subject in French. Within Core French from grades 7-12, emphasis is on the "communicative - experiential" approach with some grammar and literature by grades 11 and 12. But in the other French subject, the emphasis is on imparting content. (Junior High courses in Late Immersion Sciences Humaines and High School Immersion courses in World Issues, Theatre Arts and Family Studies.) Two weaknesses of the Extended Core approach are some loss of content in the "extended" subject compared to the English equivalent and lower written proficiency compared to Early Immersion.
C. Supplementary exposure to French outside of school - local Immersion Camps, Cultural Exchanges with French areas of New Brunswick, etc.

Development of appropriate American curricular materials in the target foreign languages would be the key to successful implementation. The result? - Public schools could produce citizens with the typical American educational background, plus foreign language skills in keeping with the new world order and U.S. international aims. The ordinary foot soldier at age 20 could be proficient, for example, in combat and in Arabic, the 6th most used language or in Russian the 5th most spoken language. The New Brunswick public school experience shows that many graduates of Immersion, including "Single Subject Immersion, grades 7-12" can be ready for adult tasks in the world of work in their second language at age 18.

I. Introduction

This paper is an attempt to show that a form of partial French second-language Immersion developed fifteen years ago in western New Brunswick, Canada has achieved favourable results compared to Early French Immersion. In addition, it will suggest that the partial Immersion model holds some promise for American foreign language and international education.

The success story of Early French Immersion in Canada has been amply demonstrated in the literature (Hart, Lapkin, Swain 1988. Parkin 1987. Morrison 1986. Stern 1984. Gray 1981). The published research, in summary, shows that Early Immersion students are superior in French compared to Core French students (who study French only one period per day). The Immersion students tend to score higher on measures of attitude and motivation to learn a second language, on oral French proficiency tests, on tests of knowledge of French-Canadian culture and willingness to use French when meeting Francophones. They also achieve about the same scores in English Language Arts and other subjects as Core French students.

However, the data contain an encouraging result of interest to proponents of partial or late-entry Immersion programs. "Data collected so far suggest that differences between the early- and late-entry Immersion students may decrease as they progress through High School" (Morrison 1986: II). The results in the area of French oral proficiency in Morrison's Ottawa-Carleton study are confirmed in the Metropolitan Toronto School Board study (Hart, Lapkin, Swain 1988: 26-27). They are also confirmed in the eleven studies of second language retention in a recent special edition of C M L R (Bahrick et al. 1990: 289 - 303). The comparisons in this paper will also be based on oral proficiency scores - unless otherwise stated.

II. Definition of Terms

A. Oral Proficiency Rating Scale - 3 Main Levels

By Grade 12, many Canadian students in the province of New Brunswick enrolled in Early French Immersion score at level 3 (Advanced) on the Oral Proficiency Scale. (See Appendix A for a full description of the 5 levels - Liskin-Gasparro 1984: 475-489).

A succinct but unofficial description of the first 3 levels would be "travel" survival - level 1, "social" survival - level 2 and "work" survival - level 3. The terms "travel", "social" and "work" describe the situations or areas in which the student would feel comfortable using the second language. The updated 1986 ACTFL guidelines speak of "novice", "intermediate" and "advanced" (Byrnes, Canale 1987: 15-24). The updated New Brunswick Department of Education terminology is "basic", "intermediate" and "advanced/superior". (See Appendices B, C, D, and E for the 1987 - 1990 results of the 20 minute Oral Proficiency Interview administered to all Grade 12 students studying French.)

In general, three oral proficiency levels (whatever the designations) are considered sufficient for use in public schools. Levels 4 and 5 apply to adult learners.

B. 4 Degrees of Immersion - Time-on-Task

Early Immersion students, as was stated previously, set the standard of achievement by scoring at the highest level of oral proficiency - level 3 or "advanced/superior". Appendix E indicates that about 60% of Early Immersion students reach this level.

There are many possible variations in the degree of "immersion" in the second language. In New Brunswick, there are four main forms - early mid, late and partial. The "partial" immersion has 2 descriptive titles. It is called "Single Subject Immersion" by some since only one subject is taught in French (usually Social Studies) beyond the "core" or basic French course. It can also be referred to as "Extended Core": - since the study of Core French is "extended" to include another subject taught in French. The terms are used interchangeably in this paper since they describe the same program. For the reader who is interested in what grade French instruction begins and in what percentage of the instructional time is devoted to French in the four main variations of Immersion, four appendices have been prepared. (See Appendices F, G, H, I.) (Lang 1989)

The reasons for the success of **Early Immersion** can be seen in Appendix F. In Grades one to three, about 95% of instruction is in French. By the end of Grade 12, over 50% of the potential Grades 1 to 12 time-on-task has been taught in the French language. So, in return for the 6000 hours of accumulated French instruction (input), there is an "output" (by 60% of the Early Immersion students) of level 3 (advanced/superior) oral proficiency in French. Twelve thousand students of the ninety thousand English-speaking students in New Brunswick public schools are enrolled in Early Immersion from Grades 1 to 12 (N.B. Department of Education 1991).

The three other forms of Immersion in New Brunswick are also popular. They are the new **Mid-Immersion** program, starting in Grade 4 (4500 hours of French time-on-task - Appendix G), **Late Immersion** starting in Grade 7 (2500 hours - Appendix H) and **Extended Core/Single Subject Immersion** (1750 hours - Appendix I). About ten thousand students are enrolled in these three Immersion variations. All other students are enrolled in Core French from Grades one to ten on a compulsory basis. Those students who continue to study Core French, on an optional basis up to Grade 12, accumulate 1300 hours of French instruction. (See the visual comparison of Core and the four Immersion variations in Appendix J).

C. Advantages and Disadvantages of Extended Core /Single Subject Immersion

A comparison of the results on the N.B. Oral Proficiency interviews (Appendices B, C, D, E) shows that the **Extended Core** program (Core French, 5 periods weekly and Social Studies, - 3 times weekly in French) delivers higher oral proficiency skills than **Core** (French 5 periods weekly). In fact, Appendix E shows that about 30% of Extended Core students can even reach the top level (3 - advanced/superior) that the majority of Early Immersion students reach.

This is accomplished by Extended Core students who have had only **15%** French time-on-task (1750 hours) compared to Early Immersion students who have accumulated 6000 hours of French instruction or over **50%** of their time-on-task. Appendix K shows the tendency of some later- entry Immersion students to "catch up" to some Early Immersion students. This is a

confirmation of the Ottawa-Carleton and Metropolitan Toronto studies mentioned previously (Morrison 1986 and Hart, Lapkin, Swain 1988).

The Extended Core program is valuable in rural areas where it is difficult to create and maintain Early Immersion centres. It is ideal for parents who want more French fluency and language proficiency than Core, but less than Early Immersion for their children. Two weaknesses of the Extended Core approach are some loss of content in the Immersion subject (usually Social Studies) compared to the English equivalent and lower written proficiency compared to Early Immersion results.

On balance, the Extended Core results may be applicable to many School Districts in the U.S.A. It is assumed that the Extended Core model, described next, could lead to foreign language proficiency levels which compare favourably to Early Immersion for some students. In addition, the study of foreign languages could be linked with international, multicultural and global education (Becker 1990: 89-90). This would make the study of foreign languages and the understanding of related cultures serve U.S. national aims in politics and economics.

III. Description of the Program - 3 Part Plan and 4 Factors

It might be useful to describe the Extended Core program which has helped the students of north western New Brunswick (near Presque Isle, Maine) achieve favorable scores on the N. B. Oral Proficiency Test at Grade 12.

A. 3 Part Plan

1. Grades 1 to 6 Core French for all students (French is compulsory for all from Grades 1 to 10 in New Brunswick).

In Grades 1 and 2, there is a readiness course ("Pirouli") designed to increase motivation and listening comprehension - twenty to thirty minutes daily. It consists of activities conducted totally in French - pre-writing and pre-mathematical activities, socialization activities, crafts, songs, Montessori-type activities, dance, rhyme, mime, use of familiar stories and fairy tales which have been translated into French, etc. The puppet "Priouli" is an integral part of this early childhood education program. (Obadia, Orfali, MacKinnon 1987).

In Grades 3 to 6 there is an enriched Core French course entitled "Le Francais en Action". It is infused with Music, Art, Math, Science, Canadian Social Studies, with references to the French cultural contribution to Canada, etc. Again the emphasis is on oral French - thirty to thirty-five minutes daily, although there is a student text and workbook with creative activities of a communicative nature (Kenney, Dick, Euler, Fiddes 1987).

2. After Grade 6, students have a choice - of Core French, Grades 7 to 10, with additional French available in Grades 11 and 12 or of Single Subject Immersion, Grades 7 to 12. The latter consists of French and another subject in French.

Core French -

Within the Core French course from Grades 7 to 12, emphasis is on learning the process of interacting with Francophones in Canada, through activities of the "communicative-experiential" approach. By Grades 11 and 12, there is some formal grammar analysis and literature through anthologies.

Immersion Subject -

In the other French subject, the emphasis is on imparting content. At Junior High, the Late Immersion Social Studies courses are used. In Grade 10, the History of the Maritime Provinces is offered in French. Other extra French courses for Grades 11 and 12 are being considered for the future (e.g. Family Studies and Theatre Arts).

3. In addition to classroom experiences in French, Junior High students are exposed to French outside of school by programs sponsored by the N.B. Department of Education. These would include locally-organized 3 to 4 day French Immersion "Camps" held in Bible Camps in the off-season, with French-language activities organized from 8:00 A.M. to 10:00 P.M. There are also week-long reciprocal-visit Cultural Home-Stay Exchanges. Groups of students from French and English areas of New Brunswick are "twinned" and spend time sharing their language and culture with each other during the school year.

B. 4 Special Factors

In trying to explain the success of this three-part plan, one has to acknowledge **four special factors** at work in New Brunswick:

1. New Brunswick is a province which is unique and officially bilingual - therefore many students already have the "utilitarian" motivation to learn a second language for practical, job-related purposes.
2. Other students who may be more "people-oriented", want to learn French for "integrative" reasons in order to be able to communicate with French-speaking people who make up one-third of the population.
3. New Brunswick is blessed with a good supply of well-trained teachers possessing native or near native oral proficiency to act as excellent language models, who can link the second language with national and international events and who can help explain another culture to students (Rivers 1985).
4. The New Brunswick French Second Language curriculum is activity and communication-oriented. The second language culture is embedded in the new courses and not taught separately. The new courses teach students in French how to role-play, negotiate, interact, complain, work in small "co-operative learning" groups, examine issues and discuss viewpoints. The new curricular materials have integrated the 4 "Syllabi" of the National Core French Study - Study of Language, Experiential Activities, Culture and Tips on Language Acquisition (Poyen 1988: 1-2) (N.B. Department of Education 1989, 1990).

Even with all its strengths, New Brunswick has a limiting factor relating to second language study. Since one-third of the population in N.B. is French-speaking, French is considered to be the only practical choice for second language study in public schools.

IV. 6 Advantages of Learning a Second Language

In the U.S., there is no such limit on choice of language. With the increased American stature in the world comes an even greater need for foreign language study, and for efforts to make American students number one in the world in Math, Science, Second Languages, etc. - as envisioned in "America 2000" (Alexander 1991). There are at least six advantages to studying second languages:

1. It could be useful and interesting to the student and of strategic importance to the nation, since it would contribute to social progress and tolerance at home and to the advancement of American interests abroad.
2. The study of a second language from an early age is part of a well-rounded, balanced education.
3. It can develop "literacy", which is the ability to create or extract meaning from life.
4. It can be part of the drive for excellence and higher standards for all - <u>but</u> students must perceive incentives to take the challenging second language courses and to work hard at them.
5. In addition, second language study can raise the "water table" for everyone - at least state-wide or ideally nation-wide. This is an issue of equity as American demographics change. Second languages are not just for the most advantaged learners or the top twenty percent - the "fortunate fifth" - as they have been described (Greene 1989: 40-43).
6. The sixth advantage to second language study is that it can help unify the nation if students learn a shared set of cultural references via the second language (Damen 1987. Hirsch 1986).

For instance, students could discuss in Junior High School Social Studies about the Alamo in German, Japanese or Russian - if the Single Subject Immersion model were adopted.

Built into the new American curricular materials in second languages would be unifying national themes about what makes people the <u>same</u> and pluralistic/multicultural themes to celebrate what makes people <u>different</u> - e.g. the perspectives of ethnic minorities, aboriginal people and women. The American schools, through their expanded foreign language curriculum could reflect the diversity of America and the world - but still strongly contribute to American unity, national literacy and national culture.

V. Pedagogical Implications for the U.S.

Based on the New Brunswick experience, Extended Core is successful. Near Immersion results can be achieved in one-third of the time for about one-third of the students. Therefore it merits consideration. Two steps would need to be taken.

A. From the list of the world's most commonly spoken languages, choices should be made of which language should be taught, in which public school, in which part of America. For example, Chinese and Japanese (#1 and #10 respectively) would be the logical choices on the West Coast or wherever a sufficient supply of Chinese or Japanese native speakers would be located. In fact, the Japan Foundation Language Centre was established in 1991 in Santa Monica, California to foster the learning of Japanese in secondary schools. Spanish (#4)

should be considered throughout the Southern U.S. while French (#12) would be popular in states bordering on Canada. In other areas, there could be a national plan to encourage the teaching of the other leading languages such as Russian (#5), Arabic (#6) and German (#11) in keeping with the "new world order" and U.S. international aims (Met 1989: 54-58).

B. After the "list" of strategic languages to be taught in public schools is drawn up, then parallel American curricular materials in all the target foreign languages would be developed over a period of 10 years or less.

Using these grades 1 to 12 materials, for instance, an American student in a city with a large Moslem minority might study Arabic, the world's sixth most used language (Met 1989: 55). He/She would receive a typical American education in English, possibly in a magnet school.

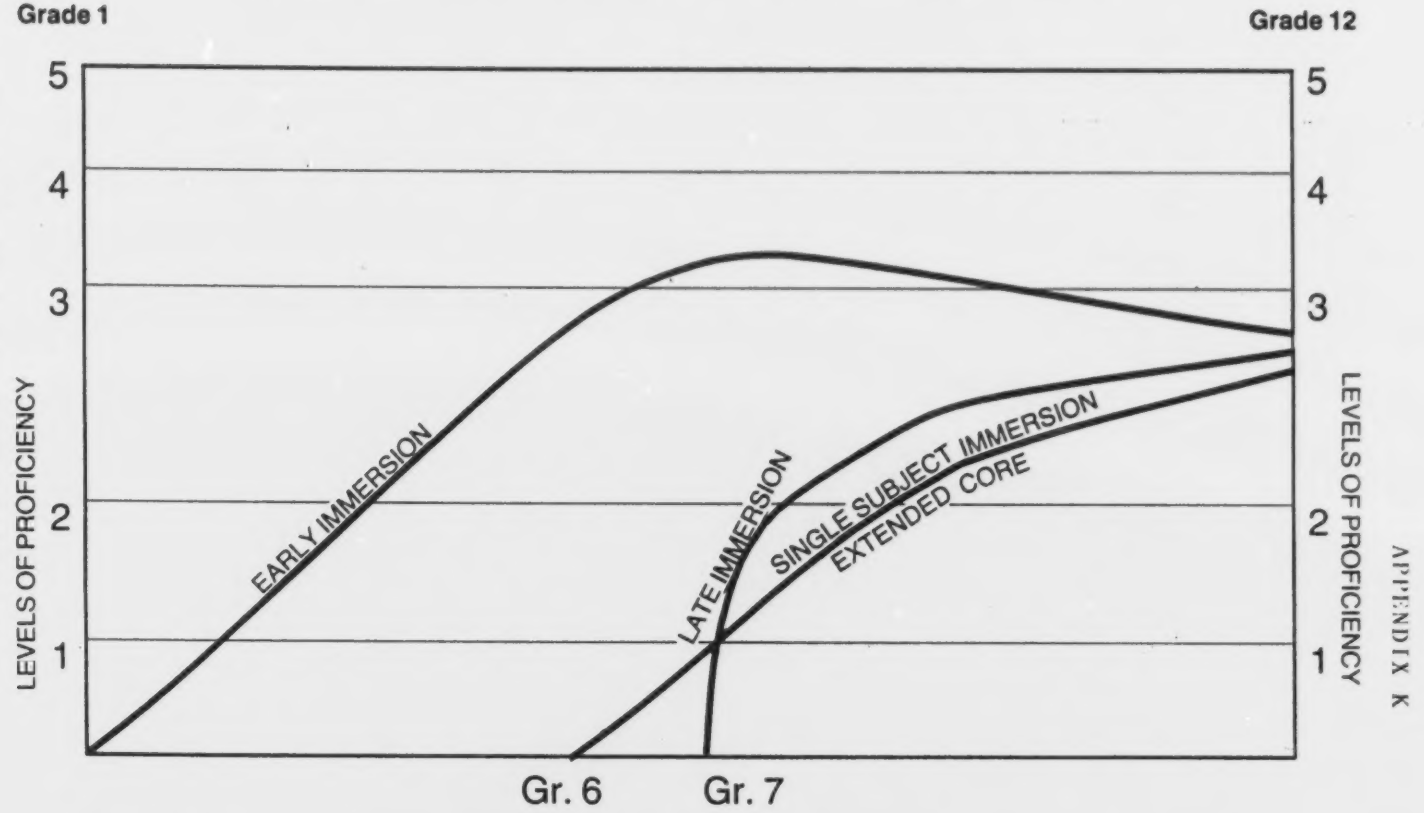
The three-part plan would be as follows:

1. In grades 1 and 2, the student would take a readiness course in Arabic to increase motivation and listening comprehension. In grades 3 to 6, the Core Arabic course would be enriched with Art, Music, Math, Science and American Social Studies with references to the Arabic cultural contribution to the U.S.
2. From grades 7 to 12, the student could opt for Core Arabic or Extended Core Arabic. If he chose the latter, he would study Arabic using new communicative-experiential materials and another subject in Arabic from grades 7 to 12. For practical purposes, perhaps the same subject should be chosen in all languages at each grade level. For example, in grade 7, a national course could be developed in early American History in Arabic, Chinese, Spanish, Russian, Japanese, French and German. In grade 12, it could be Theatre Arts, for example in all the languages.
3. In addition, every effort would be made to expose students to their target language, Arabic, outside of school (through summer camps, weekend camps, etc.) and to connect the local school with the minority group whose language is used in the area, where possible. The same three-part plan could be employed for other languages - e.g. Russian, the world's fifth most used language.

The end result would be more American citizens with higher foreign language proficiency - ready to cope with the new multicultural realities at home and with the new international realities abroad (Becker 1990: 89-90. Met 1989: 54-58). To put it in practical terms, the ordinary foot soldier at age 20 could be proficient both in combat and in Arabic through Single Subject Immersion - using only fifteen percent of his "time-on-task" from grades 1-12 to learn Arabic.

The New Brunswick public school experience shows that many graduates of Immersion, including Extended Core/Single Subject Immersion grades 7 to 12 can be ready for adult tasks in the world of work in their second language at age eighteen. This could be a useful goal for U.S. education.

GENERAL FRENCH SECOND LANGUAGE
ORAL PROFICIENCY DEVELOPMENT

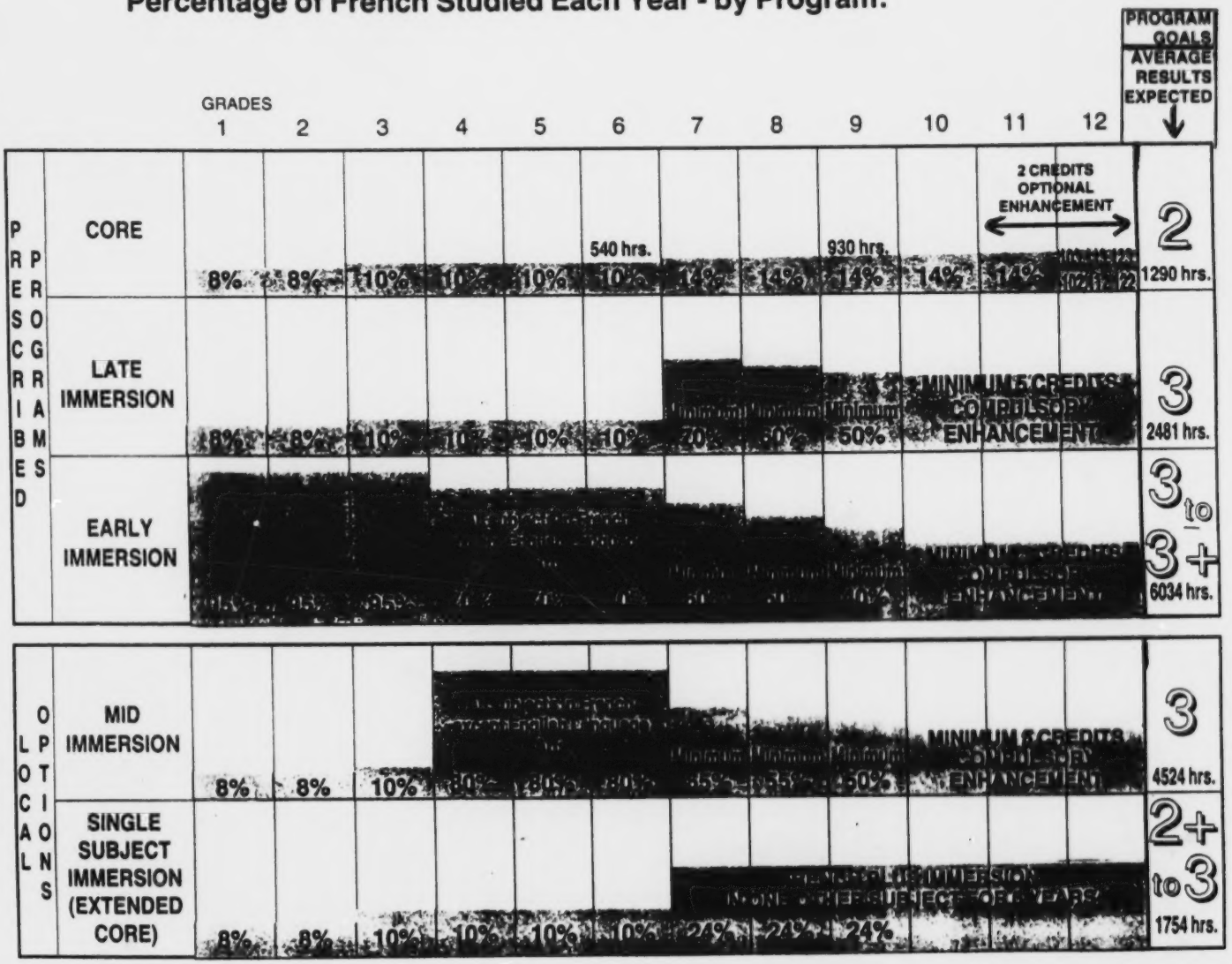


Source-NB School Districts 30&31.

Based on N.B. statistics of oral (speaking) proficiency at the end of Grade 12 (1987, 1988) and on the article by Dr. Gilles Bibeau in LANGUAGE AND SOCIETY, Winter 1984, no. 12, published by the Commissioner of Official Languages and June 5, 1975 Report to the Council of Ministers of Education Canada - Curriculum Committee - from Second Language Task Force.

APPENDIX K

Percentage of French Studied Each Year - by Program:



Source-NB Dept. of Education."Report of the Second Language Review Committee",1989.

APPENDIX J

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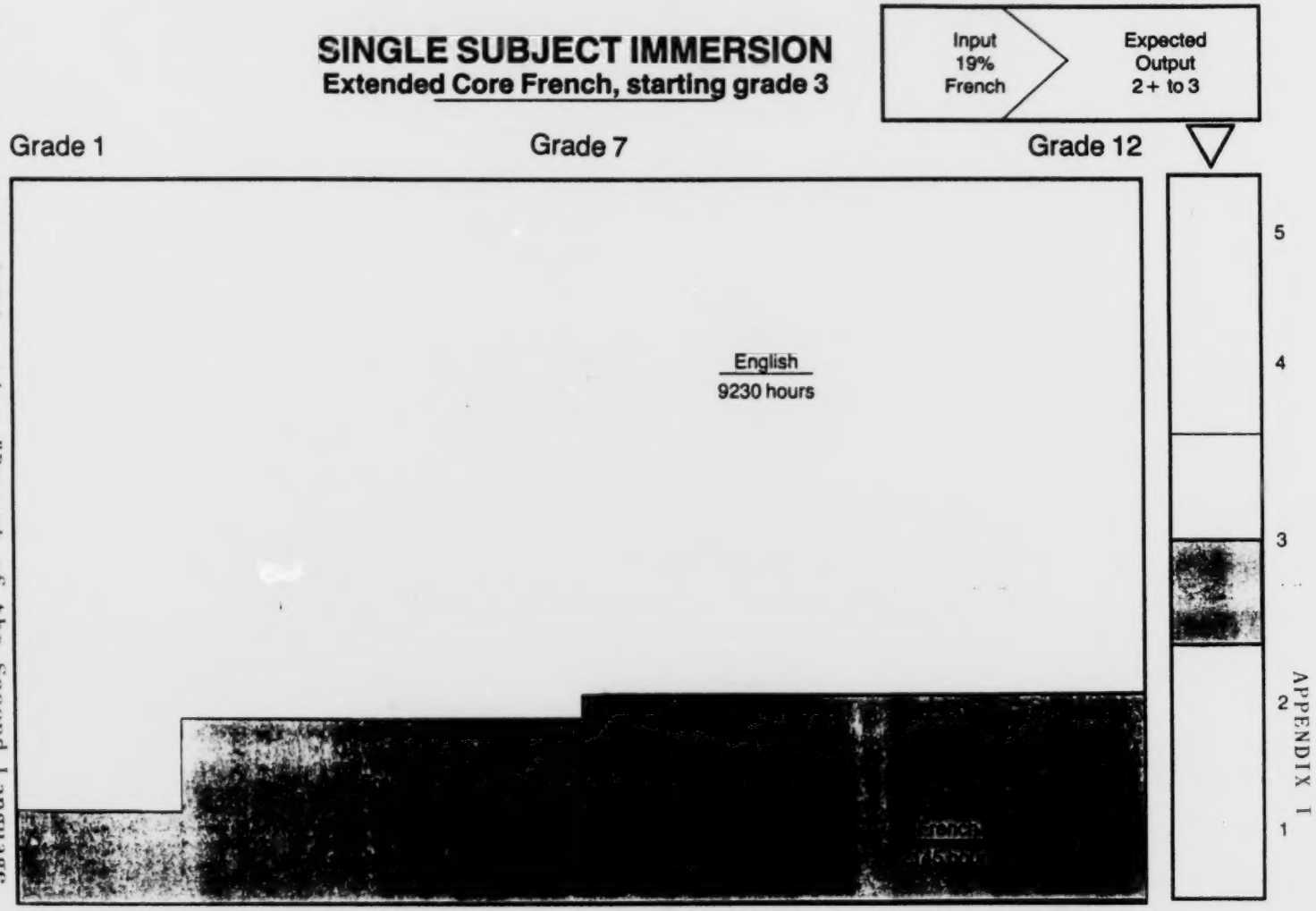
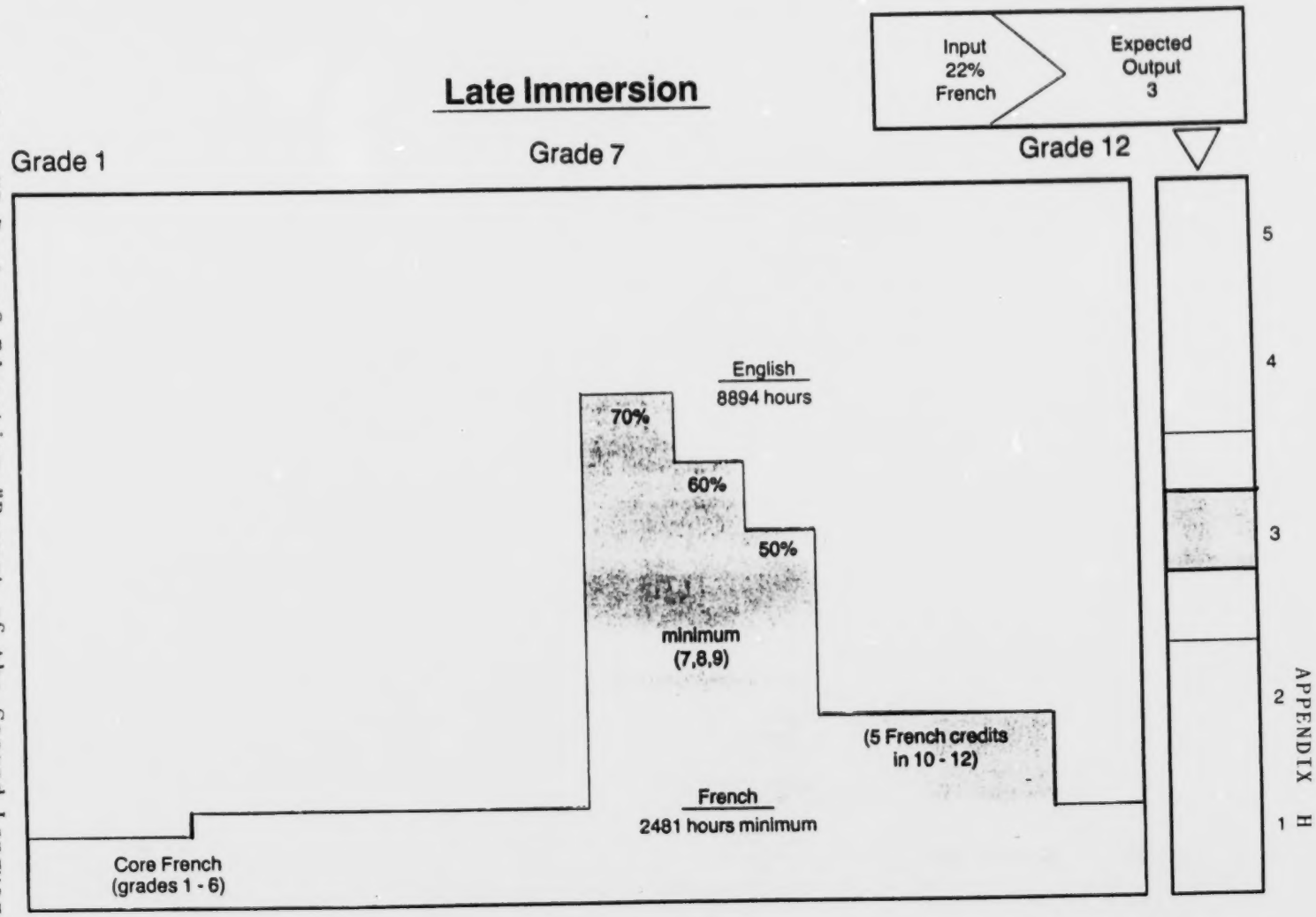


Source-NB Dept. of Education. "Report of the Second Language Review Committee", 1989.

APPENDIX I



Source-NB Dept. of Education. "Report of the Second Language Review Committee", 1989.

APPENDIX H

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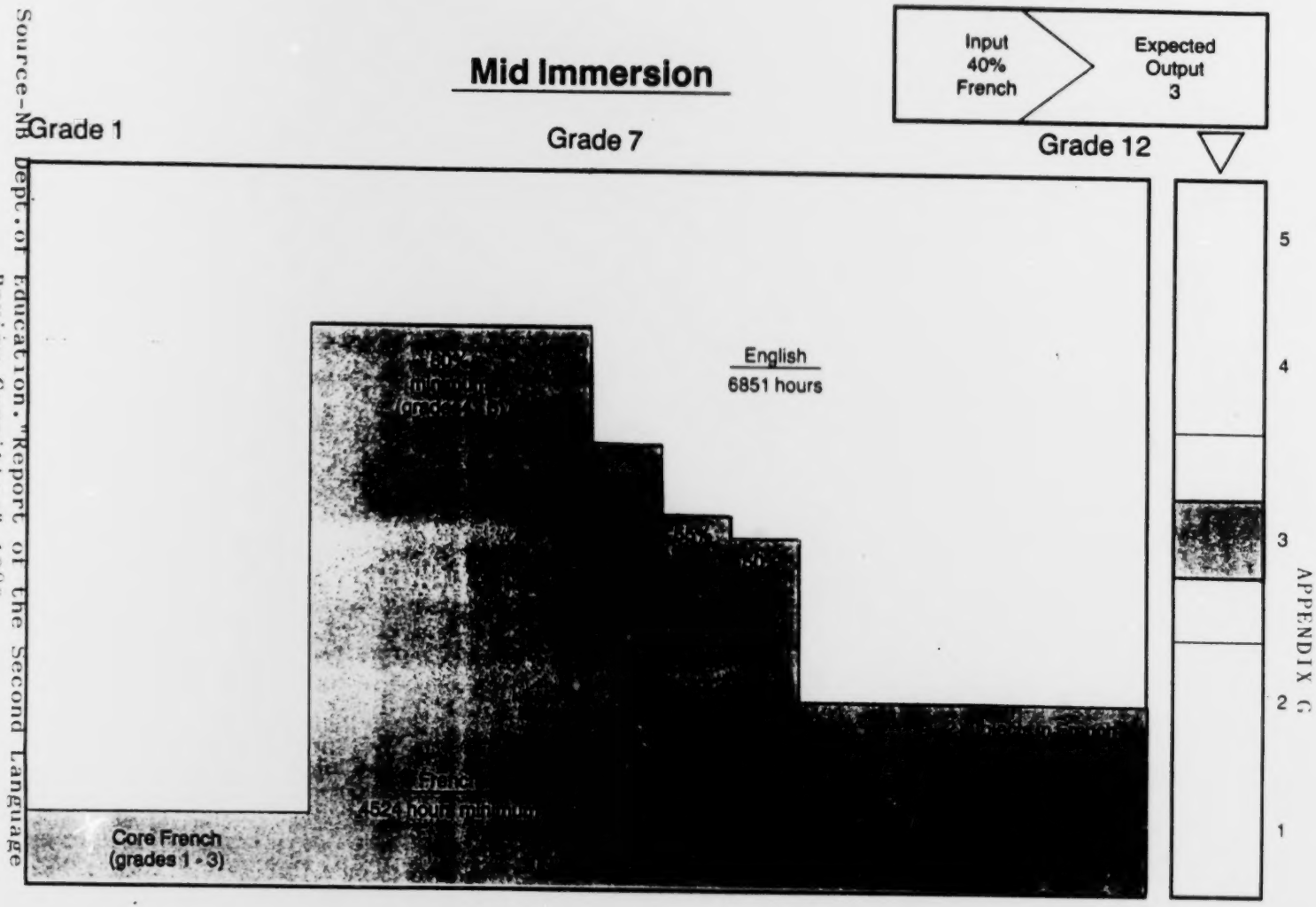

Source-NB Dept. of Education. "Report of the Second Language Review Committee", 1989.

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APPENDIX C

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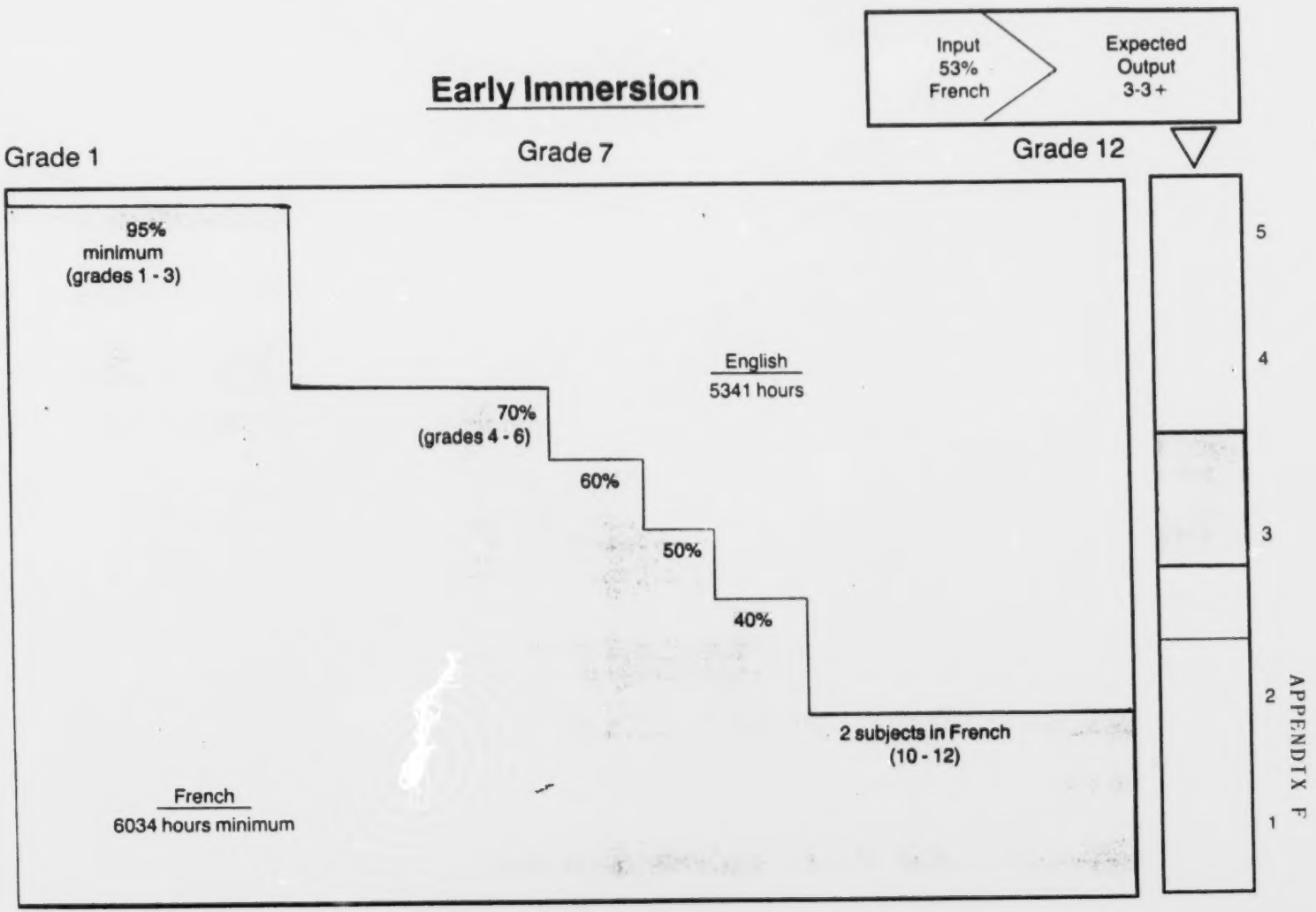

Source-NB Dept. of Education. "Report of the Second Language Review Committee", 1989.

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APPENDIX F

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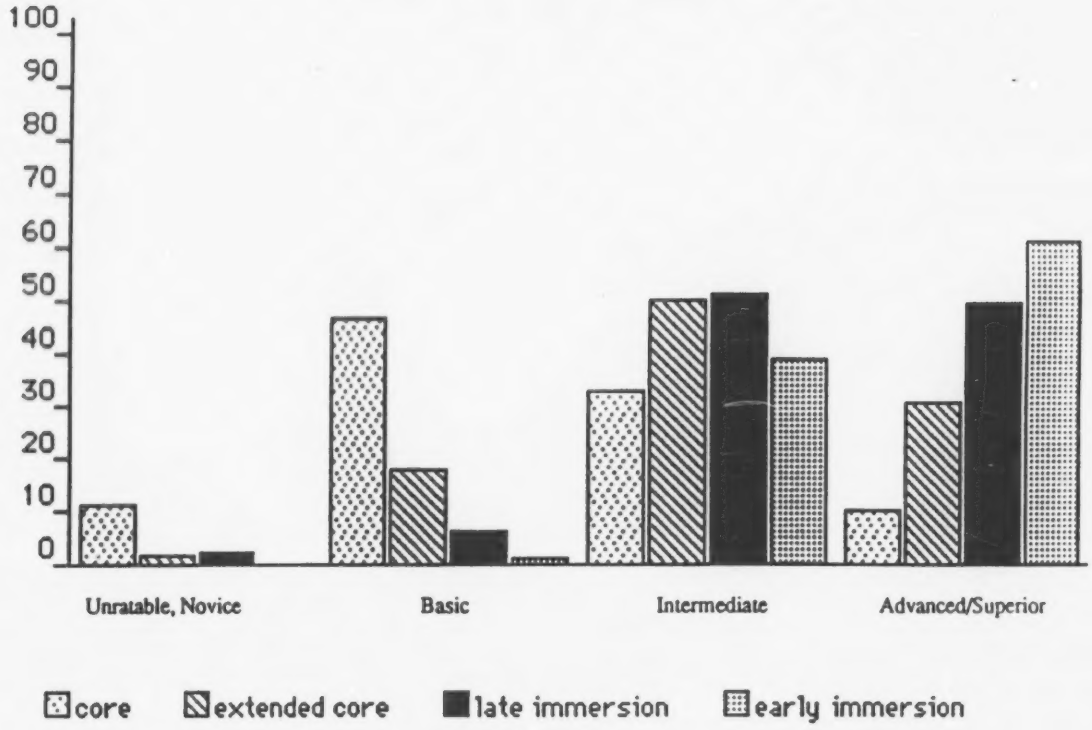
APPENDIX E

1990-91 New Brunswick Grade 12 French Oral Proficiency Ratings

TOTAL POPULATION

(condensed)



	Unratable/ Novice	Basic	Intermediate	Advanced/Superior
CORE	10.9%	46.7%	32.7%	9.8%
EXTENDED CORE	1.8%	17.8%	50.0%	30.3%
LATE IMMERSION	2.0%	6.0%	51.2%	49.7%
EARLY IMMERSION		1.3%	38.9%	61.1%

Source-Department of Education, New Brunswick

1988-89 PROVINCIAL ORAL INTERVIEW RESULTS
PERCENT OF SCORES ATTAINED BY PROGRAM BY STUDENTS IN
GRADE TWELVE

	Core	Early Immersion	Late Immersion	Extended Core	Missing	Total
0	2.1 (21)	-	-	-	4.7 (25)	2.1 (46)
0+	7.8 (77)	-	.3 (1)	1.2 (1)	14.7 (78)	7.1 (157)
1	15.9 (157)	.7 (2)	.3 (1)	-	8.3 (44)	9.2 (204)
1+	27.7 (274)	.7 (2)	3.8 (13)	7.3 (6)	8.1 (43)	15.3 (338)
2	26.7 (264)	11.4 (31)	28.9 (99)	34.1 (28)	15.9 (84)	22.8 (506)
2+	11.8 (117)	36.3 (99)	40.2 (138)	24.4 (20)	24.0 (127)	22.6 (501)
3	6.1 (60)	42.5 (116)	20.4 (70)	26.8 (22)	19.8 (105)	16.8 (373)
3+	1.6 (16)	7.0 (19)	5.5 (19)	6.1 (5)	3.2 (17)	3.4 (76)
4	.3 (3)	1.5 (4)	.6 (2)	-	1.1 (6)	.7 (15)
4+	-	-	-	-	-	-
5	-	-	-	-	-	-
	100 (989)	100 (273)	100 (343)	100 (82)	100 (529)	100 (2216)

Source-Department of Education, New Brunswick

APPENDIX D

APPENDIX C

Oral Proficiency Interview Scores by Program
Provincial Percentages
1988
Grade 12

Program	Core	Early Imm.	Late Imm.	S.S.Imm. Ext. Core	Part. Imm.
No. of students tested	(1049)	(328)	(316)	(88)	(35)
Score					
0	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
0+	[illegible]	0%	0%	0%	[illegible]
1	19.5%	.6%	0%	8.0%	2.9%
1+	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
2	24.9%	22.3%	29.4%	28.4%	22.9%
2+	12.2%	42.7%	32.3%	17.0%	28.6%
3	4.6%	22.3%	24.4%	20.5%	25.7%
3+	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
4	0%	1.5%	.9%	2.3%	0%
4+	0%	[illegible]	0%	0%	[illegible]

Grade 10
Oral Interview Scores by Program

Program	Core	Early Imm.	Late Imm.	Ext. Core	Part. Imm.
No. of students tested	(4445)	(572)	(687)	(125)	(57)
Score					
0	2.3%	0%	.3%	0%	41.9%
0+	32.5%	0%	0%	.5%	0%
1	33.8%	.2%	3.6%	12.0%	1.8%
1+	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
2	8.5%	46.3%	44.5%	39.2%	24.6%
2+	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
3	1.0%	10.0%	5.4%	4.0%	1.8%
3+	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
4	.1%	.2%	.1%	.8%	0%
4+	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]

Source - Department of Education, New Brunswick

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APPENDIX B

Oral Proficiency Interview Scores by Program
Provincial Percentages
1987
Grade 12

Program	Core	Early Imm.	Late Imm.	S.S.Imm. Ext. Core	Part. Imm.
No. of students tested	(1115)	(224)	(316)	(36)	(38)
Score					
0	3.5%	5.8%	0%	0%	7.9%
0+	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
1	18.7%	.4%	.6%	0%	5.3%
1+	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
2	23.3%	19.2%	24.4%	30.6%	28.9%
2+	13.2%	50.0%	37.8%	22.2%	36.8%
3	8.2%	21.0%	29.3%	30.6%	21.1%
4	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]

Note that Ext. Core students, provincially and in Dist. 30 & 31, score at level 3 (from 20% to 30% of them).

Grade 10
Oral Interview Scores by Program

Program	Core	Early Imm.	Late Imm.	Ext. Core	Part. Imm.
No. of students tested	(3417)	(478)	(412)	(115)	(57)
Score					
0	8.9%	5.2%	.3%	21.7%	5.6%
0+	28.8%	6%	0%	5%	0%
1	30.6%	.8%	1.2%	10.4%	5.6%
1+	18.3%	8.4%	1.8%	23.8%	7%
2	9.4%	33.5%	34.0%	27.0%	55.6%
2+	3.2%	32.3%	36.4%	11%	%
3	.6%	7.9%	11.9%	1.7%	5.6%
3+	1%	3%	2%	0%	0%
4	.1%	0%	0%	0%	0%
4+	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

Source - Department of Education, New Brunswick

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APPENDIX A

ORAL PROFICIENCY LEVELS

Level 5	**Speaking proficiency equivalent to that of an educated native speaker.** Has complete fluency in the language such that his speech on all levels is fully accepted by educated native speakers in all of its features, including breadth of vocabulary and idiom, colloquialisms, and pertinent cultural references.
Level 4	**Able to use the language fluently and accurately on all levels normally pertinent to professional needs.** Can understand and participate in any conversation within the range of his experience with a high degree of fluency and precision of vocabulary; would rarely be taken for a native speaker, but can respond appropriately even in unfamiliar situations; errors of pronunciation and grammar quite rare; can handle informal interpreting from and into the language.
Level 3	**Able to speak the language with sufficient structural accuracy and vocabulary to participate effectively in most formal and informal conversations on practical, social, and professional topics.** Can discuss particular interests and special fields of competence with reasonable ease; comprehension is quite complete for a normal rate of speech; vocabulary is broad enough that he rarely has to grope for a word; accent may be obviously foreign; control of grammar good; errors never interfere with understanding and rarely disturb the native speaker.
Level 2	**Able to satisfy routine social demands and limited work requirements.** Can handle with confidence but not with facility most social situations including introductions and casual conversations about current events, as well as work, family, and autobiographical information; can handle limited work requirements, needing help in handling any complications or difficulties; can get the gist of most conversations on non-technical subjects (i.e., topics which require no specialized knowledge) and has a speaking vocabulary sufficient to express himself simply with some circumlocutions; accent, though often quite faulty, is intelligible; can usually handle elementary control of the grammar.
Level 1	**Able to satisfy routine travel needs and minimum courtesy requirements.** Can ask and answer questions on topics very familiar to him. Within the scope of his very limited language experience can understand simple questions and statements, allowing for slowed speech, repetition or paraphrase; speaking vocabulary inadequate to express anything but the most elementary needs; errors in pronunciation and grammar are frequent, but can be understood by a native speaker used to dealing with foreigners attempting to speak his language. While elementary needs vary considerably from individual to individual, any person at level 1 should be able to order a simple meal, ask for shelter or lodging, ask and give simple directions, make purchases, and tell time.

Source-Liskin-Gasparro, Judith E., "The ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines: Gateway to Testing and Curriculum", Foreign Language Annals, 17, No. 5, 1984: 475-489.

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ON ORGANIZING A LEARNER-CENTERED ADVANCED CONVERSATION COURSE

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Abstract

The advanced conversation course offers special challenges to instructors and learners alike. The course's primary goal is for learners to improve their oral proficiency in the target language. Yet the dilemma that we as instructors face is how to facilitate an ideal learning situation whereby the learners feel confident and at ease, while they remain engaged and challenged. Thus, if the instructor relies solely on the textbook for course organization and content, the needs of the individual learner may be compromised.

The content of this article on organizing a learner-centered advanced conversation course includes: a) a presentation of strategies for overall course organization which depend on learner input and feedback, rather than on the organization and content of the text; b) a discussion of sequencing guidelines and engaging activities within the context of a unit; c) an analysis of various means of evaluating learner competence as new languages skills are acquired; d) implications and conclusion.

Introduction

The advanced conversation course offers special challenges to instructors and learners alike. The course's primary goal is for learners to improve their oral proficiency in the target language. Yet the dilemma that we as instructors face is how to facilitate an ideal learning situation whereby the learners feel confident and at ease, while they remain engaged and challenged. Galloway and Labarca (1990: 153) contend that an ideal learning context is one which "is organized around central concepts and grounded in real-life experiences; the knowledge offered is important and rich with meaning, stretching the sense-making of all learners through inquiring, questioning, probing, hypothesizing intellectual endeavor." Thus, if the instructor relies solely on the textbook for course organization and content, the needs of the individual learner may be compromised. Breiner-Sanders (1991: 71) goes so far as to contend that the text "becomes constraining, dulling, even counterproductive if followed slavishly, on the higher levels."

The content of this article on organizing a learner-centered advanced conversation course includes:

a) a presentation of strategies for overall course organization which depend on learner input and feedback, rather than on the organization and content of the text;
b) a discussion of sequencing guidelines and engaging activities within the context of a unit;
c) an analysis of various means of evaluating learner competence as new languages skills are acquired;
d) implications and conclusion.

This analysis takes into account research which has been done in students' learning styles, proficiency-based methods, and collaborative learning.

Discussion of Overall Course Organization

With the focus on learner-competency in foreign languages comes the realization that the needs of the individual student need to be considered at every stage of course design. In the introduction of the proceedings of the *Northeast Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages: Shifting the Instructional Focus to the Learner,* Magnan and Byrnes (1990: 11) state:

> In line with research on language learning, we are focusing more on the *individual processes* of language acquisition, rather than merely on *norm-based products* of classroom teaching. The learner has begun to direct the curriculum, if not explicitly, then through his or her interaction with the learning task. Consequently, the student-centered classroom is one where pair work and role-play are encouraged and where learner errors are often accepted as manifestations of developing individual interlanguage systems. Rather than focusing on normative performance criteria and what students *know about* language, we are focusing on what students *do with* language.

Let us now examine some ways in which the overall organization of the course can be made to fit the needs of the individual learner. In designing the syllabus the organization of the course can allow for students' needs and preferences to be integrated into the design of the course through:

a) students generating their own overall course goals, as well as through mini-goals generated for individual lessons;
b) contract grading;
c) having students vote on the order in which the chapters in the text will be studied.

On the first day of class there can be class discussion about what some possible general course goals would be. This also allows for a discussion of how students are at different stages of language development. Since speaking in class is often the most stressful of learning situations, as Young (1990: 426; 426) and Horwitz (1990: 22) note, it is important to directly address these fears in class as they arise, in order to reduce, to use Krashen's term, the learner's "affective filter" (Krashen 1982). This ideally begins during the first class session, with the discussion of individual course goals acting as a logical first step. These individual goals can also be reviewed and amended at midterm. In addition, as already noted, there can be "mini-goals" set by the student for each lesson studied. With the teacher being aware of what these goals are, s/he can more effectively monitor the learner strategies being used to achieve these goals (Oxford 1990a; Oxford 1990b; Wenden/and/Rubin 1987) in order to insure that the student is making optimum progress.

Contract grading is another means by which the student is given more control over the learning situation. Figure 1 below is a sample contract.

Contract for Grading Procedure

French 301

Fall 1992

1. Attendance (including French table)	(10%-20%)	_____%
2. Class participation	(20%-40%)	_____%
3. Tutorials	(5%-15%)	_____%
4. Graded assignments	(20%-35%)	_____%
5. Individual oral midterm	(10%-20%)	_____%
6. Individual oral final	(10%-20%)	_____%
		100%

Signature _____ Date _____

One of the primary benefits of this system is that the student can no longer operate from the vantage point that the grade is **given** by the instructor. Following the same argument that Shohamy (1991) posits to promote interactive assessment and evaluation between teacher and learner, is the need for the grade itself to be determined interactively. Contract grading, then, which makes the student more responsible for the final grade earned. Since the instructor establishes the general parameters for each category, there is no need to influence the students' choices. Generally, students do not seem to want any input in helping them determine their contract. The only verification necessary is for the instructor to make sure that the final grade adds up to 100%.

Many language teachers believe that there is no textbook perfect for all occasions. This is doubly true for a conversation course since there are far fewer texts from which to choose. In fact, judging from a recent French publication index (Russell et al. 1990) there appears to be nearly six basic language texts for every one text which might be suitable for an advanced conversation course. As we know, proficiency-oriented methods depend on students' being engaged in meaningful communication in the target language (Omaggio 1986). In such a

philosophy, the text should then act as a springboard for meaningful communication and should be used only as long as it fosters that communication. When the text is no longer a dynamic, positive force it must be put aside, and other related sources on the same general topic need to be found. This process is absolutely essential, as Breiner-Sanders (1991: 72) points out:

> Eclecticism needs to be fostered and taken to its natural and fullest expression. It is not a euphemism for dilettantism. It is choosing only what is most appropriate from diverse sources, systems, methodological approaches, and styles, and implementing them at suitable points in the course and under proper conditions.

One preliminary and simple way of making the text work for the students is to let the students vote on the order in which the chapters will be studied. This vote also allows the instructor to know from the beginning of the semester which chapters are the preferences of the class. This is important since preferences can vary dramatically from one class to the next. This strategy can also diffuse the notion, which has been called "the most incomplete notion of teaching" (Galloway and Labarca 1990: 130), that a class must "cover the book" during the term. Since the most popular, and thus the most interesting chapters from the students' perspective, are studied first, the sense of urgency to get to the later chapters is lessened.

Another strategy useful in understanding the preferences of foreign language students is to have them take a personality instrument like the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator or the Keirsey Temperament Sorter. The relationship between personality type and learning style has only recently begun to be explored in foreign languages (Ehrman and Oxford 1988; Oxford and Ehrman 1988). I have conducted some very limited research using Myers-Briggs, and I routinely administer the Keirsey Temperament Sorter to students whom I have not taught before. (Completing the instrument is voluntary.) The results obtained by these instruments have afforded me a better understanding of the preferences of my students, which is helpful since there are certain personality types which are more drawn than others to enroll in a foreign language class. Albion College has no foreign language requirement, although students are required to take a certain number of core courses, and some choose foreign language classes to "fill core." During a given semester approximately fifteen percent of the student body might enroll in a foreign language. Although students enjoy some freedom of choice, they students are by no means all highly motivated, nor are they all particularly gifted in foreign languages. Understanding my students' personality types has allowed me to better understand, and perhaps to more effectively solve, the problems that individual students have. It has been my experience that many "problems" that students have arise when there is a clash between their preferred learning style and my preferred teaching style. This realization allows us to move quickly toward eliminating the "problem" through devising an appropriate "Plan B" strategy. It has also provided me with important insights into some of the limitations of proficiency-oriented instruction, since certain types have more trouble than others with exercises, assignments, and evaluations based on proficiency-oriented methods.

Discussion of the Organization and Sequencing of Individual Units

The next section of this study deals with some aspects of organizing individual units. One effective strategy in beginning a unit is to brainstorm with the students in order to find what specific topics, related to the general subject of the unit, most concern or interest them. An

alternative to this large group brainstorming session is to have small groups generate two topics which are determined by consensus.

The text can still remain the basis for the general organization of a unit. It can provide useful vocabulary, vocabulary exercises, readings, discussion questions, and other proficiency-based activities. However, while the texts are often packed with activities, they sometimes come up short on actual content, thus relegating learning to short-term rather than to long-term memory (Breiner-Sanders 1991: 74; Galloway and Labarca 1990: 152-3).

Authentic materials like articles from newspapers and journals, as well as video clips, help supplement the content of any given chapter in the text. The materials instructors have at their disposal may be limited, but they may still remain a rich source of supplementary activities in a number of ways. (cf. Breiner-Sanders 1991: 83) Following the theory that any authentic document can be made to fit any level through the use of appropriate exercises, even a video for a first semester class (if that is all that is available) could be a valuable learning experience for advanced conversation students. The same can be said for more sophisticated and complex video clips, like those from French television or cinema. The key is to provide an appropriate amount of introductory material to make the experience meaningful, and to require follow-up exercises which challenge but do not overwhelm the learner.

The number of students in a class, as well as their general language competence, will also be a factor in determining which types of activities will be required of the student whether it be large group activities, small group activities, independent activities, or special projects. When making use of more collaborative situations, like small group activities, it is important to remember that there must be accountability for all the participants in the activity (Birckbichler 1982 and Omaggio 1986), although as Chastain (1990) contends accountability based simply on graded evaluation has its drawbacks. For example, proof of accountability can come at the end of the exercise when there is a large group wrap-up following the small group activity, or a report handed in by the appointed secretary of the small group, or even a quiz on the material covered during the activity. There can also be monitoring of students' adherence to or deviation from the norm if the instructor is free to listen in on the groups as they perform the task. Corrections can either be made immediately, or can be made in a more neutral way after the activity has been completed, by writing the errors or the corrections on the board and having the class discuss them. If the conversation class is large, hiring teaching assistants who are either native speakers or highly qualified alumni of the class, and who can attend class on a regular or semi-regular basis to assist in small group activities, is helpful. Thus there is the possibility of more monitoring of students' performance, and more assurance that students are doing the task properly. In addition, and perhaps most important, the instructor is not the only language model for the students. (For more observations on the various roles of the teacher in the higher-level language classroom, see Breiner-Sanders 1991: 76-9; Young 1991: 431-4).

Toward the end of a chapter or a unit, students should be able to actually provide the content for the day's activities. This supports the model of "scaffolding" and "fading" (Galloway and Labarca 1990: 130), which states that the instructor should offer much more guidance at the outset of sequenced activities than at the end, so that students have the opportunity to determine the content and direction of later activities. An example where the instructor's role is firmly in the "fading" mode would be a library activity where the students are to choose, read and

summarize an appropriate article in the target language related to the current unit. The students would later present their summary orally to a small group in the class. The summary would need to be a synthesis of the major ideas, and the presenter would be responsible for explaining any new vocabulary words that members of the small group would not understand. The other members of the group would in turn be responsible for writing out the three or four main points of the article, which they would have to submit to the instructor for evaluation. Presenters could be evaluated by the instructor through a cassette recording made of the actual presentation or by handing in a written summary of the article. This situation requires the other students to be much more attentive and engaged than if they were only expected to sit and listen passively, since they are responsible for reporting what they hear. They are much more likely to engage in meaningful communication with the presenter in order to clarify certain points or to make doubly sure they have understood the presentation.

Evaluation

The following section of this study deals with evaluating students in the advanced conversation course. Evaluations should be frequent, yet as non-threatening as possible. (Horwitz 1990:23; Krashen 1982:180; Shohamy 1991:161) One general guideline could be that half of any evaluation be from prepared material and the other half be spontaneous, where the students will have to react in an appropriate way to certain situations, or where they will have to answer questions. A possible scenario for evaluation may be, for example, where the students are expected to role play with a partner. (For many more ideas about the use of scenarios in the classroom see DiPietro (1987)). Student A presents a prepared problem to Student B. Student B must react, respond, or solve the problem in a logical and comprehensible manner. Later in the class, Student B will be able to present prepared material, and Student A will be in an ad lib situation. When the roles are reversed, both Student A and B can be paired with other partners. These evaluations can be recorded on video or audio cassette, and individual feedback can be given in written form to each student. The students can then correct their errors and return the corrections to the instructor who in turn verifies the accuracy of the corrections, and returns the re-corrected version once more.

Another element which should be included in assessing the student's performance is the progress the student has made from the beginning to the end of the course. The student's level at the outset of the course must be recorded and evaluated. This could be through an informal interview where the student engages in self-assessment (Shohamy 1991: 163) or through an Oral Proficiency Interview (Breiner-Sanders 1991: 67). It is important to note that research has shown there are problems in using the Oral Proficiency Interview as an exclusive means of evaluating the learner in an advanced conversation class (Hirsch 1985).

As was mentioned earlier in this study, it is important to consider the goals of the individual student, as well as the student's preferred learning style and learning strategies (Oxford 1990a, 1990b; Wendén and Rubin 1987) when working with individual students. It is vital that these elements be factored in as the instructor decides when, how, and what to evaluate. Evaluation, then, is not a separate entity which comes after the fact and exists independently of daily class activities, but a factor which helps determine course content and organization as the course unfolds.

A final note on the importance of frequent evaluations is that it is equally important for students to be given the opportunity to frequently evaluate the direction of class activities, or to have input in what they feel are the most effective or least effective activities. These evaluations could be in large group discussions, or they could be anonymously written evaluations. This empowers the students and gives equity to the evaluation process, but it also furnishes the instructor with valuable information on which to base future lessons. By frequently opening the doors of communication, the students are less likely to feel threatened, frustrated, or railroaded in the classroom. They should therefore be more open to engaging in classroom discussion and participating more freely in activities.

Implications and Conclusion

As foreign language educators, when we examine the status of foreign language study in the United States we should all be concerned by how few proficient students we actually train, and the adverse effect this situation has had on this country socially, politically, and economically. Furthermore, when we consider that in our advanced conversation classes we are training those very few who have become *our very best students*, then we must seriously consider why so many of our "best" students simply do not reach the elusive, superior level of language proficiency. This problematical set of circumstances requires us to assess how we as instructors might contribute to the problem. Are there some basic design flaws in curriculum and course design which prevent students from studying foreign languages or becoming competent in the target language? The situation underscores the enormous social, political, and economic implications of what we do in the classroom.

We have to do a better job of working with our students in their quest to learn a foreign language. There is a tremendous need for our instruction to be more connected to the students needs, life experiences, and academic capabilities (Belenky et al. 1986: 221), so that in the short term we deal more effectively with the students who are already at an advanced level, and in the long term we attract more and different types of students to join us in learning foreign languages.

Perhaps the best way to achieve this goal is by shifting the focus of the course to the individual learner, a daunting yet essential shift. In order to shift the focus of what we do in the classroom to the learner, we have to be willing to be learners ourselves—and learn from those whom we have the responsibility to teach. Paradoxically, we must become better learners before we can become more effective teachers.

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OPERA AND ART IN THE FRENCH FOREIGN LANGUAGE CLASSROOM

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Abstract

It has previously been shown that an opera can successfully be integrated into a high school or college language class. It is suggested that an entire semester could be devoted to just French operas and French art, using corresponding literary texts (e.g. *Manon Lescaut* by the abbé Prévost and the short story *Carmen* by Mérimée) for comparative purposes. Grammar points are included as needed; conversation about the stories (especially Louise and *Manon*) bring in cultural material about the mores of the period. The operas suggested for a semester class are: *La Voix humaine* (words by Jean Cocteau/music by Francis Poulenc), *L'Heure espagnole* (Maurice Ravel), *Péléas et Mélisande* (libretto based on play by Maurice Maeterlinck/music by Claude Debussy), *Louise* (Gustave Charpentier), *Les Contes d'Hoffman* (Jacques Offenbach), and *Manon* (Jules Massenet). Videos, which help to make the opera much more vivid, are currently available for *L'Heure espangole*, *Carmen*, *Les Contes d'Hoffman*, and *Manon*.

A class devoted to French culture and civilization usually includes some references to art and music, but seldom can time be devoted entirely to several operas. A class was offered to advanced French students at our small liberal arts college where the entire focus was on art and music, especially on several French operas. The emphasis was on the librettos, which the students followed as they listened to the music being sung. By studying several French operas, the students had a good over-view of the genre. In addition to the operas, the students studied some paintings and listened to some popular music.

Using an occasional popular French song to liven up the classroom is not a new idea. Delière and Lafayette (1985), Hamblin (1987) and Leith (1979) have all shown that French popular songs can be integrated into the foreign language classroom. Unfortunately, teachers are rather limited by the songs they happen to have collected. Most often, the lyrics don't come with the songs, and it is a tedious task to try to jot down the lyrics as one listens over and over to the same song. The *Champs Elysées* cassette programs[1] simplify matters by printing the lyrics, but those songs are not always easy to understand and are not always pedagogically appropriate.

Learning some grammar can be facilitated through learning a song (e.g. "Un Jour tu verras, on se recontrera" for learning the future tense) or songs can be used to introduce beginners to french (e.g. "Dites-moi pourquoi la vie est belle" from South Pacific). Popular songs are probably most useful when used as reinforcement.

Salvatore Bruno (1989) includes operas in the high school Italian classes. Arthur D. Brady (1980) presents one French opera each year to his advanced (and sometimes intermediate) secondary school students. Vialet (1992) has shown that French operas can be integrated into courses on culture and civilization at the college level, e.g. the rock opera *La Révolution française* by Claude-Michel Schonberg and Raymon Jeannot. Miller (1984) and Lamb (1991) have shown that opera can even be included in an elementary school class. Yet seldom are courses of French opera and French art offered in college foreign language departments as the primary subjects, with literature or grammar used in a subordinate or supporting role. Operas,

having both lyrics and music, have a certain profound impact on the listener. The students get caught up in the dramatic mood, the emotions of the singers. Beauty, art and relevance all seem to come together.

The libretti for operas are readily available and can be used in a classroom as texts. In fact, one can include some operas this year and different operas another year without having to necessitate the purchase of large text books; libretti are sold separately. Rather than using the operas as adjuncts, operas can be studied as the primary text, and the literature from which the libretto is taken can be used for comparison. Such a class was offered to an advanced French class of college students at Elmhurst College.

Popular music (e.g. by Edith Piaf, Charles Aznavour, Jacques Brel, Nana Mouskouri, Mireille Mathieu, etc.), for which the lyrics were provided, was played at the beginning of each class to start the class. But the major portion of the class was devoted to French operas and French paintings. The cassettes for all the music (and videos for some of the operas) were available in the language lab for the students; each student had a copy of the libretti. Since the French texts for the nineteenth century operas are in the public domain, those can be copied for students.

As an option to the works chronologically, the most modern work could be studied first. For example, *La Voix humaine* by Francis Poulenc (music) and Jean Cocteau (text) was the first opera to which the French class at Elmhurst College was exposed. The words are simple enough, but when put to Poulenc's music, the poignancy of the monologue is striking. There is only one voice, that of a desperate woman talking on the phone to her former lover who obviously is abandoning her. The opera (which lasts less than an hour) can be played in one class period. A take-home, essay-type exam required students to listen carefully to the opera, following the libretto in detail. For example, they had to determine where and why the lady was telling lies, how one knew that the man was not phoning from home, etc.

After the intense, rather draining experience of *La Voix humaine*, the class studied *L'Heure espagnole* by Maurice Ravel. For that opera we had not only cassettes, but a video was available as well.

L'Heure espagnole is a musical comedy. Concepción, the wife of Torquemada (a man who repairs watches and clocks) is left alone on Thursdays while her husband goes to regulate the town's clocks. This is her opportunity to live it up! Ramiro (a muscular customer) is kept busy carrying clocks up and down the stairs, while she entertains a poet and then a banker. Disgusted with the poet (who concentrates too much on composing poetry!) and the banker (whom she really doesn't like), she finally goes upstairs to the bedroom with Ramiro (sans clock!). All ends happily when Torquemada returns home in time to sell clocks to the poet and banker, whom he assumes to be *clientèle*.

The class read the text together for the beginning of the opera until the students understood just what it was about. After listening to the cassette tapes, the students viewed the video. As an evaluation, they had a take-home exam where they had to recount the story from the point of view of Ramiro (*Aujourd'hui je suis allé chez l'horlogier...*). They were to explain the meaning of *cocu* and *coucou* with respect to this story. They had to discover where the music sounded

very Spanish and which elements had an Hispanic quality. Students were obliged to listen (and follow the libretto) several times.

Péléas et Mélisande (music by Claude Débussy, play by Maurice Maeterlinck) was perhaps the most difficult opera, music-wise and story-wise. The opera's libretto is almost word-for-word the same as Maeterlinck's play. Golaud, son of King Arkël, discovers Mélisande in the forest, near a fountain. Knowing little about her, Golaud marries Mélisande and brings her back home. Once back at the castle, Mélisande meets and gradually begins to love Péléas, the half-brother of Golaud. The light and the darkness, water fountains, grottos, all take on symbolic meaning and are represented by orchestral instruments and musical themes.

Golaud has a son from a previous marriage, the little Yniold. When Golaud questions Yniold about the relationship between Péléas and Mélisande ("petite Maman")—and especially when Golaud asks him to climb on his father's shoulders to recount what he sees when he looks through the window at Péléas and Mélisande together—the tension, anxiety and jealousy are all represented by the music, counterbalanced by the child's innocence.

The final scene between Péléas and Mélisande is most dramatic. They finally admit their mutual love and their one and only long passionate kiss is witnessed by Golaud who then kills his half-brother.

There are no arias as such in Débussy's opera. It is a modern opera, filled with symbolism and tension. The music dramatically represents the moods and feelings of the characters. The students had to listen carefully to the opera several times to be able to determine which instruments were used to represent the light, the darkness, the fountains, the jealousy of Golaud. Students had to recount the story, from Golaud's point of view.

After listening to those three rather modern operas, four more traditional 19th century operas were studied. First, the class studied *Carmen* (Georges Bizet), then *Louise* (Gustave Charpentier), followed by *Les Contes d'Hoffman* (Jacques Offenbach), and lastly *Manon* (Jules Massenet, based on *Histoire du chevalier des Grieux et de Manon Lescaut* by the abbé Prévost). The students had to read Mérimée's short story Carmen and the abbé Prévost's novel, in order to compare the literary version with the opera. For *Carmen* and *Les Contes d'Hoffman*, the class both heard and saw the video versions. A videos of Massenet's *Manon* exists; the class did not have access to it at that time.

The short story *Carmen* by Mérimée is fairly difficult reading. It requires some explanation of difficult passages in class. The students noted the differences between the short story and the opera version. They became familiar with the recurring musical themes (e.g. the love or fate motif of Carmen, the Toréador melody) through reinforcement by the video. If there is an opera the students might have heard before, it would be Bizet's exotic *Carmen*.

Louise, on the other hand, was not as exotic and actually was about a young girl the same age as the students in class. Louise falls in love with a young artist who lives next door. Her mother categorically refuses to consider the thought of Louise marrying an impoverished artist. Louise's parents are portrayed as simple, hard-working, rather poor but content people, wanting the best for their only daughter.

The father returns home and the music reflects the warm ambiance of a comfortable, loving home where soup is the reward for a hard day's labor. The music reflects the love between father and daughter just as it reflects the hostility between mother and daughter.

In Act II there are wonderful street scenes of nineteenth century Paris. Louise is one of the young girls who sews in an atelier, from which she eventually flees in order to join her beloved Julien. The ambiance of the atelier where she works is as picturesque as a long description in a novel.

Act III is the scene of utter bliss, where Julien and Louise have set up housekeeping at the top of Montmartre. The bliss is eventually interrupted by the arrival of Louise's mother (not very pleasant music!) to announce that Louise's father is very ill and Louise must return home.

Act IV informs us that this was but a ruse to trick Louise into returning home. The final scene is most dramatic, where Louise begins hallucinating and becomes uncontrollable. Finally, her father tells her to get out, to join her lover. Louise hesitates but an instant, then dashes out...and of course, the father realizes, too late, that he has cast out his only child, Louise. Richard Strauss called the very final cries of "Louise! Louise! O Paris!" one of the highpoints in French dramatic music.[2]

The subject of the opera led the class to have long discussions about whether one should marry the person he loves, in spite of disapproval by parents, and whether parents are wrong to try to protect their daughter from marrying someone who does not earn a regular income. The students could empathize with both Louise and the parents. It is to be noted that in those days, a young girl could not get married without the approval of her parents. In that case, the question of interest asked if Julien really wanted to marry Louise, or if he just wanted to "shack-up" with her, knowing her parents would not approve of him?

Although the study of grammar was kept to a minimum, the fate of Louise was a good occasion to discuss certain grammar points. The if/result clauses (if in the present/result in the present or future; if in the imparfait/result in the conditionnel; if in the plusque parfait/result in the conditionnel du passé) were appropriate:

Si Louise obéit à ses parents, ils seront heureux.
Si Louise obéissait à ses parents, ils seraient heureux.
Si Louise leur avait obéi, ils auraient été heureux.

Similarly, this was a good opportunity to discuss the difference between the forms of "to marry" (*marier*, *se marier* and *épouser*).

Le père voulait marier sa fille avec un bourgeois.
Julien voulait se marier avec Louise.
Julien n'a pas pu épouser Louise.

This was also a good time to remind students that when a sentence begins with *peut-être* the verb should be inverted. They had to be reminded about the different forms of "to leave" (comparing *quitter* which takes a direct object, as opposed to *partir* or *sortir*). And then there is the ever-present problem: "he wants her to"...*il veut qu'elle* + subjunctive.

Students appear to have liked *Les Contes d'Hoffman*; the reason often given was "because it was weird." The video was most helpful in teaching this unit.

The take-home exam gave the students a chance to listen to the opera as often as was needed. They could refer to the libretto, use a dictionary, organize ideas, and write answers in coherent French. They were to indicate where and when in each act did one hear the musical theme which represented Lindorf (or the devil) How many times did one hear the Barcarole theme? Obviously, the intention was for them to listen to the opera several times.

The last opera studied was Massenet's *Manon*. Some time was spent discussing the abbé Prévost novel, comparing it with the opera (but Puccini's *Manon Lescaut* was not mentioned). Tiberge does not exist in the opera *Manon*; Brétigny of the opera is a composite of the men with whom Manon is unfaithful to des Grieux. Money plays a very important role in both novel and opera—which led to discussions (the noblemen didn't really "work" in the 18th century, did they? how was Manon to exist? etc.) By the time we got to the opera *Manon*, we could compare this opera with other operas viz., *Carmen* and *Louise*. We could compare the fathers of Des Grieux and Louise, the street scenes of Paris in *Louise* and *Manon*.

Only for the final exam did the students not have a "take-home" exam; they listened to excerpts from Manon, for which they had to identify which character was singing, at what moment, and what was going on. It was a good occasion to compare the various operas they had heard and studied throughout the semester.

When the class begin, no student had ever been to an opera. Only two students had ever heard (or heard of!) Carmen. There was some apprehension that operas were "high brow." The students found the operas enjoyable—and compared these operas with "The Miz" (*Les Misérables*). It was almost a bit like Monsieur Jourdain (of Molière's *Le Bourgeois gentilhomme*) who realized that what was thought to be high brow or esoteric, was really quite understandable, enjoyable, and not as "far out" or unapproachable as previously imagined. A liberal education must include not just what is useful for employment (such as perhaps business French) but an appreciation of music and art, too.

Other French operas which could be used in class might be *Samson et Dalilah* by Camille Saint-Saëns (for which the video is available), Gounod's *Faust* or perhaps *L'Enfant et les sortilèges*, music by Ravel, words by Colette. The video version of Rossini's *Le Barbier de Seville* (sung in French) is available and would be nice to study together with Beaumarchais' play; however the video is "vintage" black and white and not easy to understand.

Discussion and Conclusion

Whereas most classes of French culture and/or civilization include passing reference to French operatic music and art, it has been shown that an entire course can be offered which is primarily a study of French operas and paintings, with literature, history, civilization, and grammar included as needed.[3]

We started with the most modern opera and worked our way back chronologically. We so-to-speak "plunged in" with *La Voix humaine*, the shortest of the operas studied, which can easily

be studied in one or two class periods. The opening bars are so dramatic and emotional that every student is immediately engulfed in the tense setting. This was followed by the comic opera *L'Heure espagnole*, for which a video was available. The two operas for which the short story (*Carmen*) and novel (*Manon Lescaut*) were to be read came later in the course, so that students would have time to read those texts before starting the corresponding operas. The more famous French nineteenth-century operas were studied at the end, concluding a panoramic view of a musical tradition.

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Endnotes

1. P.O. Box 158067, Nashville, TN 37215-9067, or call toll-free (800) 824-0829.

2. As told to Gustave Samazaeuilh, quoted in the Libretto of the EPIC recording, Paris Opéra-Comique, Jean Fournet, conductor.

3. The class offered was of French music and art. The study of art was based on the text *Un Tableau, un enfant, un peintre, une histoire* by Eska Kayser and Jacqueline Marquet. [Editions Fleurus 11, rue Duguay Trouin 75006 Paris ISBN 2.215.01097.5, available at the Louvre Museum book store in Paris] Most of the art works included in that book are from the Louvre or the Musée du Quai d'Orsay. This book, intended for French young people, was not difficult for our students who had completed at least three years of college French. The famous paintings, often of children, are analyzed in some technical detail; there is a brief description of the life of the artist; and a bit of quite fascinating history of the period is included for each picture. Thus culture and civilization are used as **adjuncts** to the primary study of paintings.

STRATEGIES FOR PRODUCING A VIDEO-LETTER IN THE FOREIGN LANGUAGE CLASSROOM

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Abstract

In this article, video-letter will be defined as a message transmitted via the video from one party to another in order to convey visually the immediate linguistic and cultural presence of the transmitter to the receiver. The idea for producing a video-letter arose out of a workshop on video correspondence conducted in France under the auspices of the French Government and the American Association of Teachers of French. During the course of that workshop, fifteen American teachers and administrators spent one week discussing the pedagogical rationale for producing the video-letter.

In the Fall of 1990, the Intermediate French class of Marymount University, Arlington VA, produced a video-letter addressing a French class from Australia with a similar student population. The video-letter production was structured in such a way that students who performed actively before the camera had an opportunity to use many of the language skills they had studied previously in class. Moreover, while working on a video correspondence, the students were quite motivated to communicate in French with peers from another country. Abdallah-Precelle (1991: 96) discusses this awareness of the *other*: "Rencontre avec l'Autre, mais aussi rencontre avec Soi, l'apprentissage d'une langue étrangère n'est pas un savoir neutre, il interroge directement l'individu dans sa singularité personnelle et collective." Thus the video-letter became more than a cultural exchange; it was a linguistic challenge including elements of dialogue, components of an oral presentation, and strategies for improving communicative competence. Furthermore, the video-letter also conveyed feelings related to the target language and brought a new dimension of communication to the foreign language classroom.

The problematics a video-letter production in the classroom are clear. First, it is difficult to evaluate the performance of students who participate in this kind of video activity. Furthermore, it is a very time-consuming project. Finally, the teacher and the student must deal with what Phillips has referred to as both "debilitating" and "facilitating" anxiety. Students who are normally at ease, sometimes freeze before a camera. Yet, for the class at Marymount University, the video-letter production was mainly a positive experience: 1) The Marymount class developed a real *esprit de corps* while working on a language skills project; 2) Students prepared their *exposés* better than they had in the past because they knew these projects would be taped and that students from Australia would be viewing the tape; 3) Each student did improve certain oral skills.

The production of a video-letter is not only a rich cultural exchange, it is also an innovative way of helping high school and college students to develop the confidence they need in order to improve their oral proficiency. Indeed, the video camera is both an eye and an ear which, when used intelligently and with imagination, can be a valuable vehicle for stimulating and improving the communication skills of foreign language students.

In recent years, the video camera has been used to produce foreign language programs whose goals are to improve the receptive skills of students or to introduce authentic materials into the foreign language curriculum. Programs such as *French in Action, France TV Magazine, Spanish TV Magazine, Espana Viva, México Vivo, Deutsch Direkt, Actualités Videos*, to name but a few, are now used commonly in the foreign-language classroom. Herron (1991:488) and Tomasello suggest that students who had viewed *French in Action* during the course of the semester "demonstrated considerably greater listening comprehension than students for whom the video program had not been part of the semester's curriculum." Crouse and Noll (1980:39) point out that "videotape has the advantage of allowing for a more complete communicative process, including gestures, facial expressions, and body movements..." *In The Video Connection,* Altman

(1989:19) concludes that "the amount o information carried by video makes it an especially rich cultural vehicle."

More recently, foreign language instructors have actually begun to experiment with video productions themselves by encouraging student participation in various video activities. At the *Centre Censier, Université de Paris III*, Moliné and Le Coadic actively promote the use of the video camera in their French language workshops. Foreign language teachers in the United States have also begun to produce video-letters and to film student activities or to ask students to film such activities in order to promote a cultural exchange with students from other countries. However, this is but one reason for initiating a video correspondence.

In this article, video-letter will be defined as a message transmitted via the video from one party to another in order to convey visually the immediate linguistic and cultural presence of the transmitter (*destinateur*) to the receiver (*destinataire*). The idea for producing a video-letter arose out of a workshop on video correspondence conducted in France under the auspices of the French Government and the American Association of Teachers of French. During the course of that workshop, fifteen American teachers and administrators spent one week discussing the pedagogical rationale for producing the video-letter. Although my conception of a video-letter was somewhat different from that of our *animatrice*, this activity certainly seemed to be one way of motivating my Intermediate French class at Marymount University. This class is a heterogeneous one comprised of both American and international students, usually ranging in age from 17 to 23. Some of the international students have traveled in France and therefore have had an opportunity to use elementary level oral French in real life situations. The American students have either studied Introductory French at Marymount or are students who have had two or three years of high school French.

Upon learning that a French professor at the University of New South Wales in Australia was seeking video correspondents for a class with a similar population, we concluded that the project became even more appealing. Professor Battistini's class responded by sending not only one video-letter but also a second video as a response to certain comments Marymount students had made in their video correspondence. A list of such correspondents is often available in *Le Français dans le Monde or La Gazette Réseau Vidéo-Correspondence.*[1]

Initiating this video project also seemed like a good idea because my class at Marymount University was relatively enthusiastic about the project. Having taught a foreign language for many years, I realized that an eclectic approach to language pedagogy gives students with diverse linguistic talents several opportunities to use those talents. Trayer (1991:424-425) suggests that successful language learners like to communicate and that those students who are feeling-oriented' may be able "to benefit from communicating with others more than from more formal language analysis." Trayer refers specifically to gifted students, but based on my experience with the video-letter production, it was clear that the same point can be made with regard to weaker students. Finally, the decision to go forward with this project was influenced by an important practical consideration. Our class had access to an editing machine at Marymount's Instructional Media Center.[2] It is true that the teacher and students can do the filming themselves. It is preferable to use an editing machine after filming, however, since students often ramble on without thinking about time constraints. With some good editing, one can also incorporate pictures and music into the video-letter.

Another advantage of the video-letter format is that students who see and hear themselves perform on film, often "catch" their own errors and are thus given an opportunity to improve their oral proficiency. Berwald (1970:926) points out that there is also the possibility for peer correction. Indeed, if one of the goals of the foreign language instructor is to improve communicative competence (*ACTFL* 1986), the video-letter production should be structured in such a way that students who perform actively before the camera have an opportunity to use many of the language skills they have studied previously in class. Moreover, while working on a video correspondence, the students know they are addressing their remarks to a specific person or group of persons and are often motivated to perform at optimum level to communicate with peers from another country. In order to best motivate students, the teacher must be sure of having a receiver (*destinataire*). Abdallah-Precelle (1991:96) discusses this cultural awareness of the *other*:

> *Rencontre avec l'Autre, mais aussi rencontre avec Soi, l'apprentissage d'une langue étrangère n'est pas un savoir neutre, il interroge directement l'individu dans sa singularité personnelle et collective.*

The *rencontre avec l'autre* certainly proved to be a motivating factor for both classes which are described in this article. As Crouse and Noll point out (1980:391): "Students want to do their best when they know their work is being recorded, to be seen not only by the teacher but by their peers as well." In fact, Battistini reports that upon viewing the video-letter sent from Marymount, her students decided to produce a second video independently (p.c.). In this video-response, five Marymount students are addressed individually. For example, one Australian correspondent explains why he prefers abstract art to French Impressionism (three Marymount students had discussed the techniques of Renoir and Monet). Another Australian peer claims to be less interested in politics than one of his American counterparts. This dialogue is conducted entirely in French and thus the video correspondence becomes more than a cultural exchange; it is a linguistic challenge which includes elements of dialogue, components of an oral presentation, and strategies for improving communicative competence. Furthermore, the video-letter also conveys feelings related to the target language and thus adds a new dimension of communication to the foreign language classroom.

Still, the problematics of initiating a video-letter production in the classroom are clear. For one thing, it is very difficult to evaluate the performance of students who participate in this kind of video activity. Students who are normally at ease, sometimes freeze before a camera. Other students who do not usually participate, perform very well before the camera and are suddenly in their element. This actually happened to one of my weaker students. In her article on "Anxiety and Oral Competence," Phillips presents this well-known classroom dilemma. Phillips (1991:1) points out that

> for students suffering from foreign language classroom anxiety, today's proficiency-oriented classroom may further exacerbate their apprehension.

At times, this problem is compounded during the production of a video-letter. However, Phillips (1991:2) also cites studies which reveal "no correlation between anxiety and achievement in language learning." Furthermore, she quite rightly refers to the distinction between "facilitating" and "debilitating" anxiety. Based on my experience, any anxiety felt by my students during the video-letter production was of a "facilitating" nature. In other words, even though

some students did have "butterflies" during the filming, their communicative competence was not hindered by this effort.

The Marymount students also knew that they would not be evaluated solely on their video production. In fact, the video-letter grade only counted 25% of the total grade. Furthermore, it was made clear at the outset that the evaluation of each student would be based on effort as well as on performance. Before recording, all students were required to give oral exposés on some aspect of French culture. These reports were first evaluated in the classroom based on research, effort, presentation, and oral proficiency. Since everyone had already been evaluated in the classroom situation, students did not have to be overly concerned about a grade. The exposé was also a way of introducing the cultural component into our language study. The exposés included such topics as the French Political System, Impressionist Painting, the *Tour de France,* Gérard Depardieu, and Coco Chanel.

Another problem is that the production of a video-letter is a time-consuming project. Consideration must be given to the amount of time the teacher and students have in order to fit the production of the video-letter into a foreign language program. At Marymount, the decision was made to go ahead because the class was small and the project manageable. If the production of a video-letter is really going to help students with their language skills, one must have a small class or work with a small group within a larger class. Moreover, since the class was an unusually diverse group comprised of both American and international students, the production of a video-letter was a good way of "bringing us together" as well as an innovative means of improving the oral proficiency skills of all my students. In a way, the production of a video-letter is particularly valuable if a teacher has a heterogeneous class. Such a diverse group is often difficult to teach because students have varying degrees of oral proficiency. A language skills activity gives a focus to the language program and students tend to feel less inhibited about speaking.

Therefore, in the Fall of 1990, the Intermediate French class of Marymount University produced a video-letter addressing an Intermediate French class from Australia. In their syllabus, the students were informed that greater emphasis would be placed on oral proficiency and on the cultural component of language learning than on other skills. Grammar study and written work were reserved for the first part of the week. Thursdays were devoted to the video-letter and eventually, students were asked to give up personal time for some of the filming. The foreign language teacher must also expect to contribute personal time to this type of project. As mentioned earlier, this is one of the drawbacks of a video-letter production; it is a very time-consuming project. Yet the advantages do outweigh the disadvantages. For our particular class, there were three main advantages: 1) The Marymount class developed a real *esprit de corps* because everyone was working on a language skills project; 2) Students prepared their *exposés* better than they have in the past because they knew these projects would be taped and that students from Australia would be viewing the tape; 3) Each student did improve certain oral skills. After viewing the letter, students could "pick up" on repeated non-standard forms. For example, one young man who speaks quite fluently for this level, was in the habit of saying *je vas*. After recognizing this form himself during our "play-back," he corrected himself and subsequently used the standard form. Another young lady whose oral skills are quite good, often used the third person plural of the verb *être* with the singular subject. When she first introduces herself, she makes this error in the video. However, after hearing herself speak, she corrected the

error while giving her *exposé on* Gérard Depardieu. Still another student continued saying *cuisine français* instead of *cuisine française*. For the final viewing, she, too, corrected herself. These were small but significant steps in the language learning process.

The final viewing is mentioned because there were trial runs. According the strategies for a video-letter as they were spelled out in our workshop at the *Centre Censier, Université de Paris III,* the students were supposed to perform in a spontaneous way. Ideally, when conveying the "message" between *destinateur (émetteur)* and *destinataire (récepteur)* students should not be inhibited as they "play" their role. Indeed, in the video correspondence which we received from the class in Australia, spontaneity was encouraged and seemed to be of paramount importance.[3] This spontaneous interaction does add a certain charm to the video-letter. Yet, the Australian students who did opt for total spontaneity often used non-standard forms. At this level, one expects students to have errors in speech. However, these were errors related to grammatical points which are usually mastered by French students at the intermediate level. This is where bridging the gap between theory and practice came into play. The totally spontaneous approach just did not work as well for us. It was important to encourage communicative competence, but students cannot be given unstructured exercises at the intermediate level. Consequently, the students were reminded that they should consider certain questions before the filming and were asked to keep in mind the concept of "correct French" they had learned while trying not to be inhibited about speaking. In other words, the pressure was certainly **not** on to speak absolutely correct French; this was, after all, an Intermediate French class. However, the students did **know** that they were expected to use *depuis* plus the present tense, to use the verb *avoir* when stating their age, and to keep in mind other idiomatic expressions. Ideally, during the video-letter production the teacher should encourage both communicative competence and correctness. For instance, before working on the video-letter, we had studied many grammatical structures extensively, to the point where they had become almost automatic responses. What better way to try using these structures than by transmitting information to one's peers via the video-letter and thus relate language study to a real-life situation.

This is how we proceeded. At the beginning of the video, the students introduced themselves, stating how long they have studied French and what they were studying at Marymount. Most students decided to discuss their favorite activities and others did not. For the sake of variety, some students were interviewed and asked specific questions, while others introduced themselves directly. This is where most of the impromptu conversation took place. After a brief musical interval, each student gave an *exposé* on some aspect of French culture or civilization. This part of the video was more structured. Those students who were more confident in front of a camera did not need to rely on *voix-off*. The technique of *voix-off* is used most often in theatrical productions when someone must present a long text without having much time to prepare it. The text is narrated with expression, but off stage. Similarly, for a video-letter production, students who are more "camera shy" can use notecards to read sections of their exposé, while pictures which are directly related to their topic are projected on the screen. In my class, the more confident students presented their exposé on camera without notes. Some students even began to "ad-lib" while being filmed. Such an impromptu use of the target language should not be discouraged, for it often adds humor to the video correspondence. Clearly, while working on this type of project, it is important to keep a sense of humor. One should not forget that despite unexpected frustrations which can occur when attempting such a new approach to language study, the video-letter production should be an enjoyable learning experience.

While we were working on our video correspondence, most of my students felt relaxed about using the target language. Of course, one of the many surprises for the language teacher is to see heretofore confident students, and sometimes the best students, suddenly feel "camera-shy." In our production, this was mainly what I referred to earlier as "facilitating" anxiety. After videotaping miniplays of his class, Keilstrup (1980:369) reported a similar type of anxiety felt by some of his students. However, he finally concluded that the videotaping was a positive experience despite initial feelings of nervousness:

> The pressure and resulting anxiety and hesitancy experienced by many students during videotaping spontaneous conversations and situation-oriented miniplays can be included among the negative aspects of using the VTR. But after the first taping, students became more relaxed and even prefer taping their performance to performing live in front of the entire class.

Moreover, the sensitive teacher will always make allowances for students whose written and grammar skills are stronger than their oral skills. Certainly, it is those students interested in oral communication who will excel while working on the production of a video-letter. This is why no one should ever be "forced" to participate in a video project.

Given the technological advances of today, many educators believe that the time will come when the majority of students will feel comfortable in front of the video camera. Perhaps the production of a video-letter could also become one more way of helping high school and college students to develop the confidence they need to perform better when taking proficiency tests which assess their oral and receptive skills. Altman (1989:103) reminds us that in Latin the word video means "I see" and the word audeo means "I hear." Indeed, the video camera is both an eye and an ear which, when used intelligently and with imagination, can be a valuable vehicle for stimulating and improving the communication skills of foreign language students.

Endnotes

1 In the centerfold of *Le Français dans le Monde*, one can find the addresses of high school teachers and university professors worldwide who are interested in exchanging video-letters. *La Gazette RVC* is a publication of CIEP-Belc 9, rue Lhomond, Paris 75005.

2 At Marymount University, teachers who wish to use technological aids are fortunate to have an experienced professional staff at the Instructional Media Center. I would like to thank, in particular, Irene Upshur and Jerry Slezak for their help and advice

3 I received two letters from Professor Battistini who teaches French at the University of New South Wales in Australia. She makes it quite clear that she wanted her video-letter production to be a very spontaneous linguistic and pedagogical experiment.

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THE LANGUAGE OF LANGUAGE: AN INTERDISCIPLINARY APPROACH TO LANGUAGE LEARNING

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Abstract

That language fundamentally defines our thinking and our existence can hardly be denied. It is linked closely with the concept of self, and we use it to name and thus shape our world. Language penetrates all disciplines and provides a topic that is truly interdisciplinary in nature.

The study of language in general and the study of foreign languages in particular have attracted renewed interest in academic circles during the past decade. The concepts of the "global village" and "cultural diversity" have become commonplace in the jargon of the 1990s. And though the words may be as commonplace and meaningless as "Have a nice day" was in the 1970s, the concepts retain an important sense of urgency. Now, as some of the effects of cultural diversity begin to appear on college campuses and are being met by a rise in systematic racism and sexism, we must continue to define the role that higher education will play in this arena.

The development of the two new courses at Westminster College have been an attempt to address some of these concerns. The "World of Language" courses aim to provide concrete and theoretical approaches to the study of language in order to enhance the undergraduate language experience and to give a context to the language students' exploration that is the "major." A further residual effect is that they can enhance the non-language students' definition of their major and help them to articulate questions to take back "home" with them.

Physics shows us that while the world shapes us, the language that we use shapes the world. We might even say the language that we *are* shapes the world, for language undoubtedly defines us more profoundly than we can begin to imagine. (Gregory 1988: 200). That language fundamentally defines our thinking and our existence can hardly be denied. It is linked closely with the concept of self, and we use it, as the preceding quote indicates, to name and thus shape our world. Physics and language certainly make strange partners, but the study of language continues to stretch its horizons to include many disciplines. Language penetrates all disciplines and provides a topic that is truly interdisciplinary in nature.

The study of language in general and the study of foreign languages in particular have attracted renewed interest in academic circles during the past decade. The concepts of the "global village" and "cultural diversity" have become commonplace in the jargon of the 1990s. And though the words may be as commonplace and meaningless as "Have a nice day" was in the 1970s, the concepts retain an important sense of urgency. Now, as some of the effects of cultural diversity begin to appear on college campuses and are being met by a rise in systematic racism and sexism, we must continue to define the role that higher education will play in this arena.

The Department of Foreign Languages (DFL) at Westminster College[1], like many departments, had not made major curricular changes for a long period of time. The department was influenced in the early 1980s by the Dartmouth method pioneered by John Rassias, and then it became involved fairly early on in the ACTFL/ETS Proficiency movement. These new perspectives on foreign language pedagogy heightened an awareness of the need for change. In

addition to changing an approach to language teaching, the department also wanted to reconsider the ways in which it taught literature and culture classes both in English and the target languages. Yet the department found itself experiencing a certain malaise vis-à-vis its curriculum and major programs. Through a grant for $8,232.00 from the National Endowment for the Humanities, the DFL was able to bring a foreign language curriculum specialist to its campus to examine ways in which the program could be improved. Upon the specialist's suggestion two colleagues visited the University of Maryland (Baltimore County) to see their recent curricular changes, in particular to observe their new series of courses. After a visit to Maryland, it was decided that the DFL could benefit greatly from the implementation of a similar program; an outline was sketched for two courses based on the UMBC model.

In addition to revamping the curriculum, it was hoped to establish a more cohesive, interdisciplinary program for the DFL majors. Traditional foreign language curricula have included the study of language, literature, and culture (though the emphases have switched according to prevailing trends), but there has been little integration of these areas as witnessed in most catalogs that list separate courses in language, literature, and culture. The newly designed courses would serve as beginning level introductions to the study of language, culture and literature. In addition, they would create a first year experience that would draw majors into an interdisciplinary approach to the study of foreign languages and help them to understand better the "language" of their major.

This first year experience not only would acquaint students with their classmates who might share similar interests, but also could give them a shared academic experience as it relates to their major: a common ground, a common set of tools with which they could approach their study of language, literature, and culture. From this point, majors could complete their coursework and get together again in some fashion in the departmental senior capstone course where, again, their studies would be integrated. The approach provide them with an overarching perspective of their undergraduate experience.

The DFL turned once again to NEH for the grant money to realize this project and received $164,475.00. This funding was used over a period of eighteen months. The initial phase consisted of a five-week summer workshop for the foreign language faculty on campus. With the help of four guest lecturers and a great deal of work, the DFL was able to examine a variety of approaches to the analysis of literature and in particular to attempt to integrate literature with manifestations of traditional culture such as art, architecture, music, philosophy as well as with manifestations of popular culture such as film and advertising. The DFL was also able to benefit from the experts on syllabus design through participation in a FIPSE project to improve critical thinking which entailed detailed syllabus analysis. The project was to begin redesigning syllabi for our entire language/ literature/ culture curriculum.

The next phase — designing the two new courses — began the following summer. We spent a week as a department brainstorming about the two new courses and then divided into teams to design the courses. The course that the author chaired was called "The World of Language" ,and since he was only peripherally involved with the development of the other course, "Reading the World", only the language course will be discussed here.

The intent in the World of Language was to study language from an interdisciplinary perspective. To quote Field, Freeman, and Moorjani from UMBC, "we envisaged a set of courses introducing students first to the nature of language and other symbolic systems before training them in the skills required for analyzing all types of literary and non-literary texts. . . *The World of Language* was first designed within such a context and is therefore not to be considered as an alternative to literature, but as a building block for language, literature and other multi-disciplinary programs." (Field et al. 1984: 222) Students would explore language origins, acquisition and cross-cultural differences. Topics to examine included body language, gesture, the relationship between language and perception, artificial intelligence, and animal communication. The syllabus endured nine revisions during its summer preparation (and a subsequent revision after having been offered once) to achieve the most effective ordering of these topics in conjunction with the George Yule text, *The Study of Language*. (Yule 1985). We offered the course for the first time during the four-week January Interim in order to allow us the greatest amount of flexibility in planning curricular activities. Since students only enroll in one course, larger blocks of time are available for scheduling activities (videos, labs, etc.) Eighty-seven students enrolled in the course.

Because of the broad nature of the class, faculty was recruited not only with the help of the entire foreign language faculty but also from six disciplines outside of the Department of Foreign Languages. This meant that the DFL had to accommodate a total of twelve outside speakers in addition to the two faculty who met the class on a daily basis. In spite of the administrative nightmare of keeping a class coherent with so many outside speakers, the DFL truly profited from the individual expertise that each of the colleagues contributed. The outside lectures included:

1) biology: language and the brain
2) sociology: symbolic interactionism
3) religion: language and metaphor
4) philosophy: language and meaning
5) psychology: animal communication
6) mathematics: artificial intelligence

Furthermore, their participation supported the interdisciplinary nature of the course and at the same time provided a rather broad base for faculty support. Faculty from other disciplines were very enthusiastic in their evaluations of the course and consequently recommend the course to other faculty and encouraged their advisees to participate. Their participation also served to expose the students, the majority of whom were in their first year, to a larger cross-section of faculty than did courses taken by many of their peers. During the second run of this course, students were able to become acquainted with faculty but also with a few administrators (viz., the Dean and Associate Dean of the College).

Many of the extra faculty agreed to assist students in the preparation of their final projects for the course. Because of the exceedingly large number of students, most disciplines were represented; therefore, students were able to work directly with faculty in areas of specific interest to them. In one instance, a student who wanted to study animal communication in depth prearranged a co-presentation with the professor.

The students, when polled, were particularly enthusiastic about their ability to link the course material in a direct fashion either to an area of personal interest or to their major field of study. And as students usually do, they came up with some of the most innovative topics for language study: the language of hula dancing, the analysis of infant cries to diagnose birth defects, the power of language as it relates to cults, and many others. These students made connections and it is precisely these connections that we hope to realize in an interdisciplinary course. Current theories of learning also support the concept that if students make connections among the materials that they learn, then they learn more effectively and retain it longer.

The first run of the course in the January 1988 term was very successful. Evaluations by students and visiting faculty demonstrated that the DFL had indeed accomplished most of the established goals; they also drew attention to some areas where the DFL needed to strengthen the above-mentioned connections. The reworking of the syllabus during the summer of 1989 to accommodate a normal term was very challenging. Many of the activities had to be dropped because of time constraints and lectures had to be limited to the normal ninety-minute periods (two days a week). The results, however, were satisfying in that very little content was sacrificed, and in some ways, the course profited from measures to streamline and condense materials and activities. From a campus point of view, the DFL was able to recruit all but one of the previous (outside) guest lecturers. This provided us a means of keeping the course fresh in the minds of colleagues who continue to support it.

The Department of Foreign Languages believes that students have profited from the course in a number of ways. First, they have new insights into their major language that they study. They have a better understanding of the workings of language and assimilate grammatical material more efficiently. Second, many language majors decide to study a second foreign language because of their renewed enthusiasm for language study, not only boosting departmental enrollments but also solidifying the processes by which they learn another language: such processes become more facilitated as they study additional languages. Third, because a modified Rassias approach was used in our classrooms, language students served as apprentice teachers, leading drill sessions for their peers in beginning and intermediate language classes. The DFL noticed an improvement from a pedagogical perspective in the language learning that occurs in these drills. As students understand more about the nature of language, they increase their sensitivity to foreign language instruction. Many of our students have been students in drill sessions and then have had the opportunity to conduct one. This proves to be a wonderful experience and some students have actually offered drills in different languages. Fourth, students who are preparing to teach foreign languages are better prepared to take certification proficiency tests in their major.

But the list of pedagogical implications does not end here; this is just a beginning. In addition to gaining a better understanding of their major, students also begin to see the connection that language has with other disciplines. And if language study is to continue to thrive, it needs to define itself in terms of a curriculum as a whole in an interdisciplinary setting. The study of language provides an efficient vehicle for interdisciplinary courses and in particular freshman experience courses. I believe that a course that is interdisciplinary and offers different perspectives is ideal for the freshman experience because it provides a forum for students to interact with a variety of ideas and faculty members. Detractors may argue that in an interdisciplinary course that students receive no real depth and approach a topic solely from a

superficial level. The most cogent response to this concern is that most introductory courses are cursory by definition and the entire concept behind a coordinated core of courses is to progress in skills at each successive level.

Botstein quotes that the "undergraduate curriculum is out of touch with academic knowledge." (Desruisseaux 1990: A13) He proposed that the disciplinary framework is out of sync with the actual fields. I believe that interdisciplinary courses can and should respond to this challenge. Interdisciplinary suggests by definition "involving one or more disciplines" but another meaning of the prefix "inter" incorporates the concept of "reciprocity." That is, that there is give and take among disciplines. *Interdisciplinary* courses also more accurately reflect life: unfortunately, our lives do not seem to be compartmentalized to the extent that we can solve problems by choosing one from column A and one from column B. There is a mismatch between the cafeteria style of general education and real life.

Botstein advocates the reorganization around "areas, questions, issues, methodologies and not necessarily along the lines of traditional departments." (Desruisseaux 1990: A17) This would, of course, have tremendous implications for the hiring of future faculty, and Botstein concludes that "the governance of the university militates against any serious work being done" and that "you can't have a normal departmental structure and really talk about rethinking the major." (Desruisseaux 1990: A17)

Further research in this area should help us to define more precisely the role that language study can and should play not only in relation to the curriculum of departments of foreign language and English, but also to the curriculum as a whole. The development of the two new courses at Westminster has been an attempt to address some of these concerns. The malaise that we felt about the major is perhaps best articulated by a series of reports that the American Association of Colleges has recently issued concerning the major.

> For students, learning in the major means learning to take part in a continuing exploration. The role of faculty members is to provide structure and languages that support this participation: structures and languages that enhance and challenge students' capacities to frame issues, to test hypotheses and arguments against evidence, and to address disputed claims.

(AAC 1990: 4-5)

The *World of Language* course aims to provide concrete and theoretical approaches to the study of language in order to enhance the undergraduate language experience and to give a context to the language students' exploration that is the "major." A further residual effect is that it can enhance the non-language students' definition of their major and help them to articulate questions to take back "home" with them.

> "A student enters the *home* offered by the major in order, finally, to be able to leave it and see it from the outside in, by taking the knowledge, experience, and wisdom gained therein and testing them against the perspectives of other fields and the challenge of the world outside."

(AAC 1990: 5)

The residual effect that we are looking for is not simply a course to begin the exploration of the language major but also one that can: (1) lead students to an understanding of self; (2) help them piece together some of the different components of their general education curriculum; and (3), relate their liberal studies courses to their major. In other words to query: what kinds of questions might physics ask about language?

Endnotes

1. Westminster is a small liberal arts college of about 1400 students located in a small town in northwestern Pennsylvania. There is a language requirement of one year of beginning level language (or two years of high school language study) and then either another two language courses or two courses in our literature/culture in translation track.

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TOWARDS TEACHING FRENCH CIVILIZATION IN CONTEXT: A TECHNOLOGY-AIDED APPROACH[1]

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to demonstrate how technology, enhanced by the experience and supportive presence of the teacher, can be used toward a teaching of French civilization within its context. Information is being provided on the philosophical inspiration, and the format, text books, basic hardware, software, special programs, services, and materials recommended for French civilization courses. The focus of the paper is on organizational strategies, topical files, timing for maximum input, pre-and post-viewing or listening treatment of materials. A few examples give details on the uses of technology in the teaching of specific topics. The conclusion contains a list of benefits, limitations, and recommendations with regard to such technology-aided cultural teaching/learning projects.

PURPOSE OF PROJECT

The steady progress of technology within the last few decades has encouraged new approaches to the teaching of foreign languages, cultures and civilizations. This paper intends to demonstrate how various forms of technology can be used to maximize the effectiveness and authenticity of the teaching-learning experience in the study of French civilization and modern France.

Philosophical inspiration

The approach used in this study is based on a conception of the teaching/learning process that combines not only the four skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing of a language but integrates them within an environment that is as close as possible to an authentic, real-life situation. It comprises aspects of the four F's of culture with a small "c," foods, fairs, folklore, and statistical facts, in addition to those of Culture with a big "C," literary classics and works of art, and what is usually referred to as "civilization," such as geophysics, history, politics, economics, leisure, sports and daily life (Kramsch 1991). The goal is (1) to reduce to a minimum teacher or textbook discourse ABOUT language, grammar, culture and civilization, which is necessarily subjective and often dogmatic, and (2) to encourage a first-hand acquisition of skills and knowledge that is less mediated and therefore more authentic. Furthermore, this integrative approach does not separate one aspect of a foreign culture or civilization from another, such as language from literature (Swaffar 1990) or science from history, but regards them as integral and interrelated parts of a national entity, a human society that is alive and changing but also typical and different from our own.

Unlike the recommendations of certain Foreign Language Commissions, such as The President's Commission on Foreign Languages and International Studies in 1979 (Weidmann Koop 1991, Perkins 1980),[1] which tend to stress pragmatic, national security, vocational and career interests in foreign language and civilization studies, the focus in these courses is on

[1] This is a revised and considerably expanded version of a conference presentation, entitled "Minimize Subjective Theory and Maximize Authentic Experience in the Teaching of French Civilization," available from ERIC.

human values, understanding, and ethics. This is necessarily accompanied by the development of practical skills and meaningful communication in all "real-life" situations. In the past, stress on one aspect of linguistic or cultural studies over another, dictated by changing political and ideological factors, has arbitrarily eliminated many of the inherent benefits of civilization studies. Such dictates have led to ignorance and misconceptions not only about other nations but about the seriousness and fundamental value of humanistic studies in general.

The broad, contextual approach suggested here has probably motivated teachers and students since the Renaissance and never quite disappeared in Europe. Today, its realization is still only in progress. In the course of the last decade, though, it has taken a huge step forward with the steady development of technology, particularly in the area of global communication. As an ideal, it has served as the inspirational basis for the technology-aided civilization courses outlined in this study.

Format of civilization courses

In order to provide a solid historical survey of French culture and civilization, the subject matter is divided into two semesters, two chronologically unequal sequences, of which the first addresses the development of French civilization from its origins to the end of the Second World War, and the second, the most significant aspects of contemporary France. The courses described here are geared toward the most advanced level of undergraduate education, usually in the fourth year of study, when students have already acquired a certain proficiency (some are native speakers) of the language and are able to read and understand French quite readily. Usually, the linguistic challenge in these courses consists of getting rid of some lingering, often ingrained, problems with pronunciation, grammar and even vocabulary.

Teachers meet their students three times a week for fifty minutes in class, not much more. As a follow-up to the previously assigned readings or other research for the day, class time is used for student presentations, brief lectures (kept to a minimum), and general discussions of three to four related topics, for instance the painting, sculpture, architecture and music of a particular historical period.

Brief examinations are scheduled throughout the semester after each major segment of the course such as a century or the geography or educational system of contemporary France. Typically, tests consist of three parts: (1) brief oral responses (recorded on cassette) to about 7 questions of identification, (2) a few descriptive and/or explanatory paragraphs in response to precise questions concerning the subject matter of the course, and (3) an essay that requires, in addition to the acquired knowledge, faculties of synthesis, comparison, personal judgement and individual taste. Both form and content of the responses are taken into consideration in grading. Round tables with individual presentations (sometimes video-taped), and written exercises, similar to but more comprehensive than the previous tests, are used as final oral and written examinations. The program is supplemented by occasional visits to museums, lectures by visiting scholars or politicians, and the attendance of summer programs or guided study tours abroad.

Text books

For nearly two decades, *Les Grandes étapes de la civilisation française* by Jean Thoraval (Bordas 1976) has been used as the most adequate text on the Euro-American market for a thorough study of the development of French civilization from its origins to the twentieth century. In 1991, Bordas came out with a new version, which surprisingly bore the same title but named a different author, Ghislaine Cotentin-Rey, and appeared under the auspices of the French Ministry of Culture. Unfortunately, this new version of 1991 falls short on illustrations and quotations from original sources, which precisely constituted the strength of the previous one. It also contains far less historical information. Such shortcomings make it necessary to supplement the text by occasional lectures, course notes, and excerpts from other publications, for instance Palmer's *Le Passé vivant de la France* (1983) and *De la Révolution à nos jours* (1983), Mauchamp's *La France de toujours* (1987), or Coulanges and Daniel's *Un coup d'oeil sur la France* (1991).

The excellent text by Guy Michaud and Alain Kimmel, *Le Nouveau* Guide France, first published by Hachette in 1964, and of which the most recent of many updated editions appeared, enhanced by color, in 1991, constitutes a strong backbone to the study of the major aspects of contemporary France, including its geography, history, system of government, education, economy and culture. It is *the* text students tend to keep even after graduation and for their travels to France. Since it is very schematic and concise, it, too, needs to be supplemented by literary texts, articles and excerpts from publications such as Gérard Mermet's *Francoscopie* (1989), Simone Oudot and David L. Gobert's *La France: Culture, économie, commerce* (1984), M. Paoletti and R. Steele's *Civilisation française quotidienne* (1984), and journals, magazines or newspapers such as *Le Monde, Figaro, Le'Express*, and *Le Nouvel Observateur*.

TECHNOLOGICAL RESOURCES

At the heart of this study, is a carefully created technological environment that makes available some of the most sophisticated learning and administrative tools. Following is a list of its necessary components.

The available basic hardware should include:

- a powerful satellite earth station with a large (preferably 12-meter) dish that allows for the reception of regular television broadcasts from France (and many other countries around the globe) directly at faculty offices and individual classrooms

- an institution-wide central main frame that provides access to a multiplicity of computer systems and services

- IBM-compatible personal computers in each faculty office and student dormitory that are hooked up to the institutional main frame and to dot matrix and laser printers

- video cassette recorders and television monitors in each faculty office for ready convenience in previewing video recordings and develop questionnaires and exercises before their use in class or in the laboratory

- multi-standard video cassette recorders in each "designated" classroom that allow projection of video recordings of cultural, historical, political and geographical programs collected abroad irrespective of their specific technological systems such as PAL, SECAM or NTSC

- high-tech electronic classrooms and language laboratories that are available for testing and interactive video viewing and exercises

The following software, special programs, services and materials have proven to be among the most helpful:

- WordPerfect 5.1 provides one of the most convenient word processing, editing and desk-top publishing programs. Questionnaires, exams and exercises can easily be composed, revised and stored for later use. Periodic updating of course materials is greatly facilitated.

- CALIS, developed by Duke University, is a program used for grammar drills and text treatment.

- VERBAPUCE produced by the Universiteit Antwerpen, provides for drills of irregular verbs.

- Administrative tasks such as accountability, office and student records, and validation procedures can be handled through the central time-sharing system of the institution.

- The electronic mail system allows for rapid communication with anyone across campus or at other institutions. Examination questions can be sent directly to individual students or a whole class and their answers received back instantaneously.

- Telephone tie lines to major cities in the area connect with libraries and bookstores. Conference calls and impending voice/vision communication brings students ever closer to their counterparts across the oceans.

- FAX machines access the whole world and are invaluable for beating deadlines in signing up for competitive cultural events and conferences, sending in term papers minutes before they are due, or for ordering books or papers.

- XEROX machines copy, reduce, magnify and produce black and white or even color transparencies for overhead projection in the classroom or at conference presentations.

- The Educational Resources Center lends out slide and movie projectors and tape decks. It also assists in the production of video recordings of interviews, round tables or plays.

- A carefully selected collection of video recordings includes cultural, historical, political, and geographic programs such as *Les Châteaux de la Loire*, *Le Mont Saint-Michel*, *Le Louvre*, *Versailles*, *Carmen*, *Phèdre*, *Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme*, *The Trials of Charles de Gaulle*, and *The Battle of Algiers*.

- Audio cassette collections should comprise the speeches of de Gaulle, Léon Blum, the presidents and prime ministers of the Fifth Republic, interviews with Jean-Paul Sartre, and musical recordings of Gregorian chants, works by Lully, Rameau, Ravel, Bizet and Boulez and *La Marseillaise*, among other things. It is rewarding to collect one's own interviews with French novelists, critics, politicians, lycée- and university students.

- Slides and still frames of art work, typical French landscapes, monuments and documents are an asset to the program.

- The Library provides access to the holdings of the Library of Congress and has available updated bibliographical CD-ROMS. Faculty are able to use their personal computers to access the card catalogue of their library and order interlibrary loans.

- Satellite transmissions from abroad, for instance the news program of France's TV5, as well as periodic special telecasts such as *France TV Magazine*, are released directly to faculty offices and classrooms.

- Compact laser disks containing French civilization programs, produced specifically for these courses in collaboration with France TV Magazine located at the University of Maryland Baltimore Campus, are invaluable teaching/learning tools. They can be used for the development of interactive video lessons which are particularly indicated for laboratory exercises and self-starters at a lower level of proficiency.

ORGANIZATIONAL STRATEGIES

The possible uses of technology in the teaching of foreign languages and civilizations already seem endless. Technology in itself, however, can be useful only when properly applied to the specific goals of each course or program. The judicious selection and organization of available systems and materials is thus the primordial task of effective teaching. Even in this difficult process, technology itself can help control and organize the wealth of materials it provides. Available options can be organized in files that appear at the push of the button.

Topical files

For the first sequence of the course, dealing with the historical development of French civilization, computer files containing charts, handouts, and questionnaires should be created for each century, and within each such file, subfiles, for instance, on the art, architecture, literature, history, philosophy and social life of the historical period. For the second sequence of the course, concerning modern France after 1945, files are organized by topics such as geography, industry, transportation, education, *francophonie*, the Fifth Republic, political parties, literature, and business correspondence. After faculty visits to France or attendance of professional conferences, files are likely to receive new input: maps, charts, illustrations, or recordings. It is relatively easy today, with the rapid processing of information, to create new files or to rearrange and complete old ones. Among the most important strategies of a teacher is to be ready to provide topics and situations that correspond and respond best to student needs and interests at the time the courses are taught. In recent years, ethics, war, feminism, the individual rights of human beings to live

or to die, capitalism vs. communism, and democratic vs. republican values triggered lively discussions.

Timing for maximum intellectual input

In using technology in teaching, one must take into consideration the relatively short attention span of students. Audiovisual presentations should be kept short and allow enough time for individual reactions and discussions. Segments should be carefully chosen for criteria such as acute interest, unusualness, humor, controversial nature, or affective appeal (Terrell 1988) in order to trigger a quick response and provoke an exchange of ideas that leads to the discovery of their relevance to the students' own lives and thinking. There should also be opportunities for total immersion into an authentic situation over an extended period of time to encourage automatic linguistic response within the target language and a "feel" for national and cultural specificity. Yet, it is recommended to monitor a lengthy viewing process, for instance with a questionnaire, not only to check the attention span but also comprehension. Without such careful planning, the use of technology in teaching can easily become counterproductive and simply add to the passive viewing and listening habits so detrimental to our modern TV generation.

Pre-or post-viewing or listening treatment of materials

In order to make the best possible use of technological means and enhance both student learning and acquisition of knowledge, selected materials must be culturally or historically integrated, questioned, discussed, compared, and used creatively. The result is a most fruitful and engaging learning process which, however, requires a continuous pre- and post-viewing and listening treatment of the materials by the instructor. In addition to the actual teaching, each year the instructor thus faces the challenge of having to establish a syllabus for a course that is not only based on the traditional textbook but also on the integration, treatment, and physical preparation of the ever changing products of technology. There is no guaranty that the technological set up will also work as planned on the day for which it has been scheduled. Instructors therefore have to be ready to substitute for technological failure in order to avoid wasting even one of the precious minutes of class time.

EXAMPLES OF TYPICAL USES OF TECHNOLOGY IN THE TEACHING OF FRENCH CIVILIZATION

Nearly each year, a historical event or figure receives added public attention by the media, usually for reasons of an anniversary celebration. These have been excellent opportunities for collecting technological teaching materials. The years 1989, the bicentennial of the French revolution, and 1990, commemoraling the various anniversaries of de Gaulle, were particularly rewarding.

Studying a major event in the development of French civilization: the French Revolution, 1789-1989

1. Introductory exercises: integrating the event within the historical, political, economic, and cultural situation

Two 50-minute periods of the first semester are usually devoted to the study of the 1789 Revolution in France. This is preceded by a survey of the reigns of Louis XV and XVI, the eighteenth-century philosophers, the Encyclopedia, and the arts and architecture reflecting the spirit of the historical moment. As homework, students are required to read the assigned pages in the detailed French Civilization textbook with all the pertinent quotations, from the warnings of Turgot, the oath of the *Etats Généraux*, to the declaration of the Assembly that the homeland was in danger.

2. Class activities: identification of historical sites, characterization of figure heads, comparison of customs, interpretation of symbols, analysis of political events

Detailed maps of Paris and France are used to identify the location of Versailles, the *Jeu de Paume*, the Bastille, and the Tuileries. Slides contain paintings and engravings of historical events and of revolutionary figure heads such as Danton and Robespierre. Segments of the film, *La Nuit de Varenne*, feature the aristocracy and how they dressed, spoke, and what they valued. Comparisons can be made between the costumes of the new "citizens" and the elaborate robes and wigs of the aristocrats. Jean Renoir's film, *La Marseillaise* (1938) depicts a rather voracious and benign Louis XVI at breakfast on July 14, 1789 and, in another segment, a woman making a revolutionary speech at a Jacobin club in Marseille. Ariane Mnouchkine's famous theater production, entitled *1789*, dramatizes the exploitation of the Third Estate by the two powerful ruling classes, church and nobility. While viewing a large reproduction of the "Declaration of the Rights of Man" on the classroom wall, an overhead projector allows to read a few of its articles and compare them to those of the "Declaration of the Rights of Women" proposed by Olympe de Gouge. A video program shows symbols of revolutionary France, among them the most recent *Marianne*, inspired by the features of Brigitte Bardot. The class can listen to the passionate tunes of the *Marseillaise*, translate and compare its form and content to their own national hymn and, probably with enthusiasm, record their own rendering of it on cassette for a fun-filled replay. Individual students may view the film *Danton* on their own TV during its campus-wide distribution by the Educational Resources Center and debate the role of Robespierre in the years of terror and execution.

3. Contemporary relevance of the topic

The study of the years of terror may lead to a discussion of President Mitterrand's decision in 1981 to abolish the death penalty and with it the *guillotine*. This may develop into a debate concerning the right to capital punishment and the treatment of criminals and prisoners in the United States. David's painting of *Marat in his bath*, could be analyzed in relation to the violence and murder experienced by presidents and other important political figures of this country in recent history. A fragment of a telecast from the bicentennial celebration in Paris, July 14, 1989, in which Jessie Norman, draped in a large *Tricolore* and looking much like Delacroix's *Liberty leading the people*, engages in a passionate rendering of the *Marseillaise*, could prompt a

discussion on the spirit of 1789 and its significance today, two centuries later, for minorities in America.

4. Historical legacy

The regular satellite telecasts of the French news recorded directly in the classroom, in November 1989, showed the streams of East Germans trying to escape to freedom through Hungary and, on November 9, the ominous Berlin wall, scribbled with graffiti about peace, humanity, and freedom, crumbling in front of the televiewers' eyes. The segments seem to evoke the enduring spirit of one of the greatest moments in French history and civilization, as if it had manifested itself again with renewed vigor in the bicentennial year of 1989 in Eastern Europe. The impact of all these technological means of information on 1789 and 1989 are such that students are not likely to forget the lesson.

PREPARING WITH TECHNOLOGY FOR A COURSE ON MODERN FRANCE IN THE NEXT SEMESTER: 1990, THE YEAR OF CHARLES DE GAULLE

The year 1990 marked the one hundredth anniversary of the birth of Charles de Gaulle (1890), the fiftieth of his *Résistance* speeches from London (1940), and the twentieth of his death (1970). There are numerous audio-visual products available for a discussion of de Gaulle's role in the First World War (his capture by the Germans in the battle of Verdun), the *Résistance*, the liberation of Algeria, the constitution of the Fifth Republic, his dilemma after 1968, and finally his legacy to the governments that followed. A quick computer search of the bibliography of the MLA and the catalog of the Library of Congress reveals the most recent studies on de Gaulle that may be of interest to undergraduate students. De Gaulle's speeches from London are available on cassette, in particular the famous one of June 8, 1940. There are also interviews with Jean-Paul Sartre and Simone de Beauvoir, and recordings of Albert Camus and other participants in the war against Vichy and Nazi Germany. A prize-winning BBC documentary by George Vicas, entitled *The Trials of Charles de Gaulle* (1962) and a film, *The Battle of Algiers*, seem particularly suited to the discussion of the ethics of war, and more so when shown in conjunction with a French documentary on the war in the Gulf. Even from the daily satellite transmissions of the news from France, it is quite easy to record speeches and ceremonial functions of past and present presidents and prime ministers of France that followed de Gaulle in the course of the Fifth Republic.

CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of the technology-aided civilization courses outlined here is to advance toward an ideal where the development of French civilization and the realities of modern France could be taught and learned within their authentic context. It would be presumptuous to claim total success for the project. Yet the benefits of the endeavor, it is felt, have largely outweighed the limitations and the drawbacks encountered in the process.

Among the benefits derived from technology-aided teaching are the following:

- Technology can create an environment that is the next-best thing to being not only spatially transported into another country such as France but also temporally led back centuries into the past.

- Such "technological visits" can be repeated until the language and contents of recordings are fully understood and "appropriated".

- Authentic sounds and images are brought directly into the classroom.

- Students are exposed to native discourse, at a normal speed, with regionally varying but authentic accents.

- Non-verbal communication can be observed in mannerisms, gestures, facial expressions, and the use of non-articulated sounds.

- The discourse can be analyzed for sociolinguistic purposes.

- Sociopolitical attitudes and views can be studied within a real-life situation.

- The oral and visual reinforce each other in their effect and message.

- Subjective theories and interpretations by a teacher or in a textbook can be avoided or corrected by the immediacy of the viewing/listening experience.

- Speeches and decision making processes by major political figures are there to be observed by each individual viewer without prior censure and potential bias.

- Vocabulary can be acquired with its proper pronunciation and contextual meaning and significance.

- Idiomatic phrases are understood and retained with less learning effort.

- Technology appeals to students: viewing is more popular with most students than reading. It seems to them less tedious than traditional ways of studying.

- Direct satellite telecasts of the French news are among the most popular uses of technology in class.

- On the spot documentary transmissions of sports or political events trigger the most lively response, encourage comparison, seem most relevant to students, and provide them with a feeling of being "on top of the news."

- Technology conveys a sense of freedom (Tamisier 1989) from all kinds of barriers such as time, space, governmental, parental and teacher control.

The observed limitations of technology were usually due to systemic difference and outside control:

- The consumer ideology dominates the production of most forms of technology such as video programs and films. Many researchers are stressing this problem (Daniel 1989, Debray 1989, Morin 1989, Sarde 1989).

- Videos are "produced" and their sounds and images most of the time are not renderings of authentic situations.

- Sounds and images are "framed," chosen, selected to convey a specific message. They are not there in their natural environment.

- The French government, *l'Etat*, exercises powerful control over the news and most other media.

- Technology tends to reinforce stereotypes which are readily accepted by American audiences.

- Technology, just like Culture over the centuries, tends to be elitist. It seems to follow age-old prejudices and does not seem democratic in its portrayal and treatment of women (Makward 1989) and minorities.

- Technology tends to be normative and limiting in its ways of providing information.

- Technology can be dictatorial in its choices, exclusions and simplifications (Porcher 1976).

The following recommendations are offered to help overcome existing limitations in the teaching of civilization with the help of technology:

- Collect materials that are not produced by the elite, on the elite, and for the elite.

- Use regional sources from radio, television news and cultural programs.

- Produce your own videos, slides, and interviews.

- Complete the viewing and listening experience with what you know and encourage students to do the same (activate the hermeneutic process).

- Provide pre- and post-viewing and listening exercises. Help them "read" the text of the discourse they hear (Fiske 1978).

- Ask students to identify typical signs and structures and compare them to those that fulfill equivalent roles and functions in their own environment. Practice comparative "semiotics" to enrich understanding, draw attention to characteristic detail and understand relationships.

- Warn against the traps of technology (which are similar to the well known traps of the printed word), against believing everything they see and hear.

- Encourage students to keep a critical distance, an individual and human "otherness" toward the information provided by technology.

- Technology offers enormous support in the attempt to immerse the student of French civilization in an authentic atmosphere, but it cannot do so on its own. It will always need the pedagogical and intellectual skills, the experience, and the supportive presence of the teacher and the informed interest of the student to be effective.

- Finally, in the midst of enthusiasm and optimism triggered by technology we must remember that technology can only be a surrogate, never the authentic situation or experience with its time-and space contingencies and its human complexities. Even the most recent events of modern France already belong to the past. With the proper human input, though, technology can become the "next-best thing" (Petit 1989). It can help along the way toward the ideal of an authentic, contextual teaching of French civilization and, in this capacity seems to accomplish more than any other teaching instrument available at this time. Future technology no doubt will further develop and refine this unique potential.

Endnotes

1. In the report of the President's Commission on Foreign Languages and International Studies of 1979, political and security concerns outweigh cultural and general educational ones: "Nothing less is at issue than the nation's security. At a time when the resurgent forces of nationalism and ethnic and linguistic consciousness so directly affect global realities, the US requires far more reliable capacities to communicate with its allies, analyze the behavior of potential adversaries, and earn the trust and the sympathies of the uncommitted... Our lack of language competencies diminishes our capabilities in diplomacy, in foreign trade, and in comprehension of the world in which we live and compete" (Perkins 1980).

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WHERE IS THE TEXT? DISCOURSE COMPETENCE AND THE FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEXTBOOK

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Abstract

Increasingly, foreign language textbooks have espoused a pragmatic approach to the teaching of language, underscoring the value of communicative competence, functional language use, and conversational effectiveness, while at the same time retaining to some degree the more traditional goals of structural analysis and "knowledge about" language and culture(s). However, the notion of discourse competence, defined here as the ability to understand and produce connected, coherent speech in conversation, has remained relatively neglected by materials writers. The purpose of this paper is to determine to what extent grammatical and rhetorical discourse phenomena are addressed in recent French textbooks which espouse communicative or proficiency approaches. In a small-scale survey of eight widely used elementary and intermediate French textbooks, we analyze the explicit claims and implicit assumptions about discourse which are reflected in grammar explanations, oral exercises, and samples of text. Trends such as chapter organization by speech acts, repertories of gambits and routines, and catalogues of useful expressions for conversation are an encouraging change from the strictly grammatical syllabus. Nevertheless, limitations remain. Initiatives to present language at the discourse level are characterized by the tendency to reduce discourse to lexical phrases, the failure to distinguish clearly between structures and expressions targeted for comprehension and those which students are expected to produce, and the absence of explanations of usage which are informed by native speaker norms governing the use of verb tenses and other structures.

Introduction

For the past ten years or so, beginning and intermediate textbooks have espoused communicative and proficiency approaches. This functional orientation has emphasized contextualization, "real-life" language use and information exchange, structure in the service of communication and meaning, and pragmatics, that is, socially and culturally appropriate language behavior (O'Connor Di Vito 1991: 250; Terrell, 1990: 201). However, one very important aspect of effective communication — discourse competence — remains relatively neglected in textbook materials. By discourse competence we mean the ability to produce and understand those features of extended speech or writing which facilitate connectedness and cohesion, whether in non-interactive report/monologue or in interactive conversation.

The purpose of this paper is to discuss how discourse contributes to oral proficiency, and to determine whether or to what extent this important aspect of communication — cohesion in speech and conversation — is directly or indirectly addressed in commercial materials. To this end, we surveyed eight French textbooks (five beginning, three intermediate level), all of which are representative models of communicative or proficiency-based approaches. The textbooks selected for this survey include six widely sold, well known textbooks and two beginning level textbooks which have recently appeared on the market for the first time. The materials reviewed

are, at the first year level, *Allons-y* (third edition, 1992), *Deux Mondes* (1988), *Entre Amis* (1991), and *Situations et contextes* (1990); at the second year level, *Bravo* (1989), *Du Tac au Tac* (1987), and *Qu'est-ce qui se passe?* (third edition, 1990); and lastly, a program which spans both levels, *French in Action* (1987). In surveying this material (books and accompanying video and/or tape programs), we looked at all program components to determine whether language is represented primarily on the level of sentence or on the level of text.

It is important to note that for the purposes of our analysis, we focused on speaking and listening skills. Discourse competence is an equally important part of reading and writing proficiency and merits the same kind of study. However, we chose to limit the scope of this survey to those skills which usually receive the greater emphasis in beginning and intermediate foreign language classrooms. Furthermore the textbooks in our survey, like most others on the market, give priority to listening and speaking skills.[1]

All of the textbooks reviewed make reference in their prefaces to the importance of proficiency, communicative language use and related concepts such as interaction, strategic competence, socio-linguistic appropriateness, and authentic language. *Deux Mondes*, for example, defines its primary instructional goal as "proficiency in communication skills" (Terrell *et al.* 1988: xi) *Entre Amis* includes "communication-enhancing strategies of both a linguistic and a pragmatic nature" (Oates *et al.* 1991: vii); *French in Action* provides "a flood of authentic French in authentic circumstances" (Capretz et al. 1987: 2); *Allons-y* "allows for maximum interaction among students and between students and instructors...based on tasks to be accomplished and on effective linguistic functioning in real situations" (Bragger and Rice 1992: xv); *Bravo* aims to "provide students with the opportunity to use their language skills in a highly functional way" (Muyskens et al. 1989: ix); *Situations et contextes* asserts that "socio-linguistic appropriateness is as important as linguistic accuracy" (Siskin and Recker 1990: iii); and *Du Tac au Tac* is "organized around the functions needed to interact in conversation, not around situational vocabulary or grammatical features of speech" (Bragger and Rice 1987: v). Interestingly, however, with the exception of *Du Tac au Tac*, none of the textbooks surveyed refers explicitly to discourse, perhaps because the term and concept are less familiar to classroom teachers than the notions of communicative competence and proficiency. Yet discourse features are indispensable to successful and smooth flowing communication. Discourse competence is defined in the Foreign Service Institute (F.S.I.) proficiency factor descriptions for speaking as the ability to communicate in such a way that the "substance of the message is more noticeable than the form." It is one of five factors analyzed in the evaluation of oral proficiency in the F.S.I. test, the other four being interactive comprehension, structural precision, lexicalization, and fluency.[2]

Definition of Discourse

Broadly speaking, discourse refers to language beyond the sentence level. If a sentence expresses an idea (referential or illocutionary), discourse refers to how this idea fits together with other ideas in an interaction or text. Discourse is what makes a passage of speech or writing text (Brown and Yule 1983: 191), whether this text is a conversation between two or more participants, an oral monologue (such as a lecture, briefing, or presentation), an interview, or a written text (such as a story or instructions).

Discourse features include grammatical markers which facilitate cohesion across sentences: pronouns, conjunctions, deictics (such as demonstrative pronouns and adjectives, temporal and spatial adverbial markers — "now," "then," "after," "once," "here") (McCarthy 1991: 35-39). Other discourse features are rhetorical rather than grammatical — "beyond the sentence" elements which mark transitions or separation of main ideas from parenthetical comments. In terms of conversational interaction, discourse features include openings, topic shift markers, gambits, closure markers, and conversation management devices such as clarification requests and repairs (Kramsch 1981: 23-26). At any level, discourse refers to cohesion and sequential organization within a single turn or monologue, or across turns in conversation; discourse features allow speakers and listeners to make sense out of what has been said and to anticipate what is to come. Discourse problems in learners' speech (inappropriate redundancy, for example) often result in lack of flow or continuity, and amount to an inability to maintain one's part in a conversation.

Language teaching materials have reflected the tacit assumption that the learner must move from smaller to larger units, from the word to the sentence to the text. The learner builds in this direction: vocabulary, verb tenses, sentences and then, at the advanced level, texts. However, not all discourse instruction need be reserved exclusively for advanced level students. Even beginning learners can be taught to use certain discourse elements in their speech. Beginning level students often speak using a list of short, discrete sentences. They generally do not have any problem beginning the list, since it is often an answer to a question, such as "What did you do over the weekend?" Their problem is in ending the list. Students do not seem to learn how to signal that they have nothing further to add; they simply stop speaking, and the listener is left hanging. Kramsch, among others, advocates teaching simple conversation management devices to signal such closure (1981: 11). Beginning students also need the kind of language they can use immediately in the target community, such as pointing words ("I want this one, not that one"). In addition, learners need to know when sentence fragments and ellipsis ("John does well in school. Mary does too") are appropriate. A teacher's request that students respond with complete sentences (especially common in beginning level instruction) is usually issued in the interest of reinforcing grammatical structure. However, in language use among native speakers, complete sentences are frequently not appropriate, economical, or smooth rejoinders. If, as instructors, we indiscriminately encourage the use of complete sentences in students' speech, we may actually be fostering awkward expression on their part.

The specific features that come under the rubric of discourse vary according to whether we are talking about spoken or written text. The F.S.I. discourse factor descriptions for speaking provide guidelines for the evaluation of a speaker's discourse competence. Speakers are evaluated, in order of progressive levels of proficiency, for their ability to: (1) produce continuous discourse (making appropriate use of sentence fragments as well as complex syntax); (2) make a point, develop and support ideas, and make transitions between ideas in extended production activities; (3) exhibit appropriate turn-taking behavior; (4) vary syntax and effectively and word order; use rhetorical devices (such as speed changes and intonation); (5) take and hold the floor; open and close discussion; (6) convey attitudinal as well as referential information; (7) and ultimately, realize their communicative intent and bring about desired outcomes.

These guidelines are expressed in terms of production, although comprehension of the interlocutor's speech is implied in some cases. Discourse competence can be expressed in terms

of comprehension/appreciation as well (for example, the ability to understand culture-specific organization of narratives and conversation). This is a point to which we will return further on.

Survey Findings

Almost all textbooks in the survey are organized by speech acts or language functions combined with thematic or situational contexts. Most are organized such that the chapter begins with a speech sample — usually a dialogue/conversation, or sometimes a letter. The dialogue is a privileged place where language is represented, and it is one of the major sources of input which textbooks provide. The dialogue text serves as a *context* — for exercises and vocabulary. But paradoxically, despite its privileged place in the lesson, in most cases the text also remains a **pretext** — for teaching sentence structure, lexical items, or speech act gambits. Vocabulary and structures do not serve as glosses for the text; rather, the text a is pretext for presenting specific language structures.

Although an opening text could and sometimes does serve as a comprehension sample, more often than not, the dialogue is a short, concise text which serves as a model for student *production*. The emphasis on production (vs. reception) which almost all textbooks reflect, results in simplified, idealized speech for students to reproduce. Unfortunately, this goal also dictates a relatively inauthentic conversational sequence. Natural conversational phenomena such as overlap, false starts, repetition, and clarification are understandably not part of the model text. However, as a result, students are consequently deprived of exposure to a number of important discourse features. Consequently, in role play situations they are frequently at a loss for transitional devices, ways to close a conversation, and other conversation management tools.[3]

After the dialogue, the next pedagogical unit in most of the textbooks is a summary of kernel structures and key expressions. These expressions include single words and whole sentences, such as polite requests and appropriate responses. While often reflecting a speech act orientation, these sections remain quite lexical and list-like in nature.

Following the vocabulary/useful phrases component, a grammar section provides explanations of structure. Illustrations of grammar points are most often single sentences. Grammar-oriented exercises also remain at the sentence level, and although increasingly one finds discrete sentences which are contextualized, that is, thematically and sequentially related to one another, these exercises do not constitute continuous text in a discourse sense (Walz 1989: 162).

Following the structural and vocabulary exercises, a common feature is a communicative activities section. Such activities guide the students to use the language they have learned in situations and social contexts. This communicative activities component, along with increasing emphasis on pair work in oral exercises of all kinds, is arguably one of the most successful features of recent textbook writing. If there is a drawback here, it is in some cases an overly ambitious agenda for the student. In *Bravo*, for example, students are provided a short example of a narrative joke in French, and are then directed to tell a joke of their own to the rest of the class. Unfortunately, joke-telling can be an extremely difficult feat even for many native speakers of a language, and intermediate students are quite ill-equipped to cope with such a culturally sophisticated task.

In reviewing these textbooks, we decided to take a closer look at those units dedicated to the extremely important language function of narration. In textbooks, narration is invariably coupled with presentation of *passé composé* and *imparfait* (although in native speaker speech, storytelling often involves extensive use of the present tense as well)[4]. In the beginning level textbooks, an almost identical sequence is followed: introduction of several sample *passé composé* items in the opening dialogue, followed by grammatical explanations with sentence-level examples. Several chapters later, the same format is followed for presentation of *imparfait*. Then, still later, usage of the two tenses together in narration is explained. As anyone who has taught foreign languages knows, it takes a great deal of time and experience and exposure to spoken or written text for speakers to develop competence in this area. However, even in the intermediate level textbooks, there are very few extended samples or stories for students to hear or read. Typically, *imparfait* and *passé composé* in combination are illustrated through short, authored paragraphs; often the sample text is broken up and analyzed for tense usage. Textbook and taped exercises involve sentence transformations and fill-in-the-blank paragraphs. Again, the emphasis is on production, and little exposure to oral or written stories is made available. Students are given sentences and then asked (in communicative activities) to produce text.

Bravo clearly displays an awareness of conversation management needs in storytelling. It provides a three-part conversation sample involving narrative. The *expressions typiques* sections deal with such functions as to how to start up a story, how to connect a series of events, how to wind down or close. Generally, each function is associated with several phrases (e.g. *Tu ne croiras pas ce qui m'est arrivé/You won't believe what).* However, this repertory of phrases is not accompanied by sufficient samples of how these devices are actually used in real conversations. Students are not exposed to enough narrative text. To its credit, on the other hand, *Bravo* places new and highly needed emphasis on listener response, providing students with interesting things to say when they listen and respond to a storyteller.

Qu'est-ce qui se passe? provides students with a shared context for language learning and language use: pictures and picture stories. The syllabus is organized around what the authors term "basic language functions": giving and getting information, designating, qualifying and describing, reacting, explaining, expressing feelings and opinions, and telling stories. But the outstanding feature of the chapter on telling stories is *that there are no stories.*

The textbook is our survey which provides the most extended samples of text is *French in Action*. Indeed, the entire program is organized around a story which continues over fifty-two episodes and is recounted both in audio and written form. From the very first lesson, *French in Action* provides a great deal of text — dialogue, narration, and explanation, as well as expository text in the form of related documents. In fact, the primacy given to text is *French in Action*'s salient feature. The point of departure for language learning is the story itself: language is analyzed to the extent necessary to understand the story as well as talk about the story. The text does not appear to be simply a pretext to illustrate the grammar, lexicon and discourse structures on the agenda. By virtue of its length, attention to discourse is built in. There is a certain narrative momentum that has inherent interest — the story is such that it propels the student to read on, to follow the development of ideas. That is, in order to understand Lesson 36, the student needs to have understood Lesson 35, and so on. Moreover, in *French in Action*, exercises and activities are text-based, although there are few analyses of discourse per se. Rather, there are drills in which adjacency pairs serve as cue and response, text completion exercises drawn

from the story, and role plays, all of which involve reconstituting the text. While there is little explicit analysis of the discourse structure of the text (save for adjacency pairs), exercises and activities are based on the text and bring the student back to the text.

The dialogues in *Qu'est-ce qui se passe?* and *Du Tac au Tac*, by contrast, serve to illustrate the discourse gambits, vocabulary and grammatical elements and functions presented in a given chapter. Exercises do not bring students back to the dialogue text. In *Qu'est-ce qui se passe?*, exercises are built around "reaction gambits" or creation of sentences belonging to the thematic context of the chapter. In contrast to *French in Action*, *Du Tac au Tac* provides a more limited sample of text, despite its express focus on conversation and storytelling. While there is little text, we find a good deal of analysis beyond the sentence level. This analysis, furthermore, focuses on discourse structure (openings, closings, transition markers, speech acts, and so on) rather than on verification of comprehension of content.

How can textbooks provide more text? Audio programs are clearly an ideal vehicle for exposure to oral narrative. Indeed, one of the beginning textbooks surveyed, *Entre Amis*, takes advantage of the medium to provide students with a reading of *Le Petit chaperon rouge* (*Little Red Riding Hood*). The fact that the content of the story might be known frees the listener to pay attention to formal aspects of the narration (in this case, tense usage). This kind of exercise involving real exposure to storytelling is a positive development.

Increasingly beginning and intermediate programs are not just textbooks but rather multi-media packages, including video and visual material as well as the standard audiotapes which provide oral production practice. *Bravo*'s Student Activity Tape, and the listening comprehension component of *Entre Amis*, for example, provide excellent language samples, coupled with interesting tasks for the listener to perform. The length of these samples is an advantage: students are exposed to greater input, and benefit from the redundancy of message which length can provide. Such listening comprehension work is predominantly content-oriented, but in some cases, pragmatic issues — register, level of politeness, or appropriateness — are also addressed. However, while cultural and pragmatic issues are increasingly evident in beginning and intermediate materials, discourse phenomena and conversation management seem to be more specialized concerns, taken up explicitly only in a supplementary text like *Du Tac au Tac*.

In conducting this survey, we found that language in textbooks is most often represented on the sentence level. Where text is provided, with few exceptions it is in very short samples. Students are taught to understand and participate in conversations through imitation of the model dialogue. In addition, they are given a number of gambits and phrases to use in conversation. However, these phrases are often presented out of context, more or less as equivalent items, and in list-like form. Language in these textbooks is analyzed in terms of vocabulary, grammar, and functions, with the greatest emphasis still going to grammar, but with increasing emphasis on speech acts. Grammatical structures are rarely analyzed in terms of their discourse functions. Finally, and most importantly, students are asked on the one hand (in exercises) to manipulate sentences, and on the other hand (in communicative activities) to produce extended speech.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The limitations on teaching discourse competence at the elementary and intermediate levels are that textbooks tend to be (1) production-oriented and (2) sentence-based.

Despite the current emphasis on communicative and 'real' language use in foreign language instruction, the sentence remains the traditional unit *par excellence* of textbooks. The recent focus on speech acts is welcome, but it perpetuates the representation of language at the sentence level, or at best, at the adjacency pair level. In the classroom and in textbook materials, high priority is still given to structure and syntax. At the same time, in exercises and role play activities, students are expected to use language effectively beyond the sentence level. Textbooks continue to give students what amounts to vocabulary lists (albeit embellished with gambits and speech acts) as preparation for "real" conversation. In effect we are asking students to produce oral texts (conversations) on the basis of very little textual input. *Where is the text?*

Part of the reason why text is missing is that our focus has been on production, not on comprehension. Textbooks are production-rather than reception-oriented, and the textbooks in our survey (with the notable exceptions of *Deux Mondes*, which promotes the Natural Approach, and *French in Action*) for the most part reflect that orientation. In spite of increased interest in receptive skills and comprehension approaches, commercial materials and classroom teaching continue to privilege speaking. This is understandable: speaking is what most students say they want to do, what gives them the most satisfaction, the greatest feeling of accomplishment. Furthermore, textbooks — a written medium — cannot effectively provide exposure to extended oral speech samples. Ironically, if the textbooks surveyed are any indication, we still expect students to produce language on the basis of very little input or exposure to text. Yet students need to hear and see a great deal of texts. They need to notice how conversations, briefings, interviews, and stories are opened and closed, how transitions are marked, even how oral lists are ordered and closed.

One argument for teaching discourse competence by means of reception is that production activities are frequently frustrating for adult learners (young or old) who have a great deal to say but lack the means with which to express their ideas. Reception activities, such as observing interactive behavior, or analyzing written or aural text for discourse or pragmatic features, allow students to deal with language in a more sophisticated way. In addition to audio and video components, textbooks could certainly provide longer samples of authentic text (writing, or transcripts of speech) for purposes of analysis rather than rehearsed production.[5] It may be useful to understand and appreciate differences between French and American conversational styles and oral narrative structures, for example, even at the beginning level (Wieland 1989).[6]

Another argument for teaching discourse by means of reception activities is that in many instances, it may not be an appropriate goal to encourage students' adoption of French discourse. Changing the culturally specific way in which one tells a story, for example, is not only difficult, but probably not desirable. However, it is extremely helpful for someone who will travel abroad and deal with people from a different culture to understand and appreciate differences of this sort. *French in Action* certainly exploits the possibility of training students to notice features in its videotapes rather than produce them. *Entre Amis* demonstrates a low-key, non-prescriptive approach to language behavior in many of its cultural explanations. For example the authors note

that French people generally respond to compliments by deflecting them or adding information, rather than by directly accepting them. Without insisting on students' adoption of this norm, the authors suggest that it is important to understand the cultural difference, and that it can be "linguistically enjoyable to develop a few rejoinders" which are culturally appropriate (Oates *et al.* 1991: 37).

A shift to developing discourse competence through reception, however, does not mean abandoning production goals, particularly when it comes to working with written exercises. How is a beginning student to learn how to use definite and indefinite articles, pronouns, the *passé composé* or *imparfait*, and so on, if not in textual context? The definite vs. indefinite article in French, so often cast solely in terms of specific vs. general reference, frequently functions in texts to distinguish old or shared information from new information. Similarly, the *c'est/il est* distinction, generally explained in terms of speech acts (identification vs. description) can be treated from the same discourse perspective (new vs. old information).[7] The often used cloze paragraphs, which ostensibly "contextualize" structural or vocabulary items, are generally a series of sentences with frequent lexical/adverbial/verbal cues to signal the appropriate grammatical choice. The cue is usually located immediately before or after the blank, which encourages the student to make the choice based on the immediate structural context rather than on an understanding of global meaning. But for the student, a text with blanks is not a text at all. Visually, it is not readable. Thus, we have yet again an instance of the student being asked to produce text without real textual input.[8]

An increased focus on discourse competence in beginning and intermediate textbooks would encourage us to explore other options for the traditional dialogue as opener. The dialogue can be replaced by extended speech events out of which are excerpted pieces of functional language. It can also be used for listening comprehension exercises. Over the last ten years or so, we have seen an evolution in commercial beginning and intermediate textbooks toward offering "whole" programs: audio/video/computer/written components to teach culture and communication. *Entre Amis*, for example, defines itself as "a communicative, function-based, multi-media program that thoroughly integrates culture and language" (Oates *et al.* 1991: vii) *Allons-y* as a "mutually supporting network of learning components" (Bragger and Rice 1992: xv). The fact that commercial materials now include multi-media components is promising: video and audiotapes are ideal vehicles for exposing students to lengthier oral text. Indeed, it is in these audiotape programs, that is, on the periphery of the total package, that we begin to find extended texts. Lengthier texts require that the student attend to discourse features in the conversation or story in a way that the relatively short dialogue "vocabulary containers" we have come to expect in traditional foreign language textbooks do not. While the written component of the textbooks remains focused on the sentence level, tape programs appear to be improving in terms of focus on text level. We need, then, to encourage both teachers and students to make better and more frequent use of tapes. Our society is still very book-oriented in terms of language teaching and learning. It is our hope that materials writing and classroom practice will increasingly promote access to the extremely important language input which extended text can provide.

Endnotes

1. In his study of textbooks and the teaching of speaking skills, Walz (1986) comments that most of the 22 textbooks in his survey emphasize the speaking skill, and that none gives priority to either reading or writing.

2. The Foreign Service Institute, U.S. Dept. of State, is the only government agency involved in proficiency testing that has further elaborated the general Interagency Language Roundtable (ILR) level descriptions by defining five factors for each level of speaking and reading proficiency. Other government agencies work with the ILR global level descriptions only; ACTFL guidelines are also global definitions, adapted from the original ILR descriptions. For further comparison of government and academic testing programs, see Clark and Clifford (1988).

3. In their study of direction-giving in natural conversation and textbook dialogues, Scotton and Bernstein (1988) note that samples of real conversational exchange contain insertion sequences (openings, parenthetical comments, confirmation checks, pre-closings) and discourse features (fillers, incomplete sentences) which are typically missing from textbook models.

4. See O'Connor DiVito (1992) for a discussion of the use of the present tense in narration.

5. In a similar vein, O'Connor Di Vito (1992: 55) recommends that French language teachers emphasize comprehension rather than production exercises on written uses of the historical present, since students are not expected to produce the kind of texts in which this tense usage occurs.

6. For beginning level students Wieland (1989) recommends a focus on comprehension of spoken narratives, and for intermediate and advanced students a shift to attempts at production of narratives.

7. Magnan and Ozzello (1991) have suggested ways to teach a number of grammatical structures at the discourse level, including the *c'est/il est* distinction and *si*-clauses. "Grammar and Meaning: Teaching French at the Discourse Level." For analyses of the use of other grammatical structures in a discourse context, see Péry-Woodley (1991) and Cornish (1991).

8. The following is a useful alternative to the commonly used cloze passages for teaching the use of the *passé composé* and the *imparfait*, and one which helps the student understand their respective discourse functions. First, the students listen to the entire narrative read aloud twice by the teacher. At this point, students do not look at the text. Next, on their own students silently read the text and fill in the blanks. Then, once students have completed the blanks and discussed their choices in class, pairs of students read the entire reconstituted text aloud to each another. As a follow-up to this exercise, students list (1) the events, and (2) the commentary, descriptions, or evaluations in the narrative. The point of the last step is to draw students' attention to discourse functions of the *passé composé* and *imparfait*, that is, the marking of events and background information, respectively, in the narrative.

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